



2012 Survey for Emerald Ash Borer Underway

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MADISON – The survey season for the emerald ash borer (EAB) is underway this week in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) aims to hang just under 2,120 purple, box-like detection traps in ash trees, mostly across the northern half of the state. Adult beetles have not yet begun to emerge but the sticky traps will be waiting for them when they do.

The traps are designed to attract beetles through color, scent, size and location. They are coated with a sticky substance that traps the beetle if it lands on the device. Chemical lures attached to the inside of the trap give off a scent that only the beetles can detect, helping to draw them onto the sticky surface.

“It’s difficult to detect and trap the adult emerald ash borer,” said Randy Sthokal, DATCP’s EAB Program supervisor. “Especially in early infestations when trees aren’t heavily infested and there aren’t many in an area that are dead or dying, raising suspicions of nearby residents.

“But the benefit of successful early detection is that communities and property owners have more time to prepare for widespread infestation and can develop plans to try to save some trees or spread out the cost of tree removal and replacement.”

Three seasonal workers will begin setting up traps the week of April 9; other full-time staff have already begun that work. Wisconsin’s survey effort is part of a national survey funded by a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS). Nationwide, approximately 50,000 traps will be deployed in 47 states.

Nearly all of Wisconsin’s traps will be placed in counties north of a line from approximately Trempealeau to Manitowoc. Roughly 100 traps will be in southern locations. Survey traps in Bayfield, Burnett, and Douglas counties will be placed by contractors working directly with USDA APHIS and are not part of DATCP’s survey efforts.

In 2011, EAB survey traps detected infestations in two additional areas: one in northern Racine County and the other just one mile east of the City of La Crosse. The current map of Wisconsin’s infested and quarantined areas can be found on the Wisconsin EAB Program website at www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov.

In Wisconsin, 12 counties are under an EAB quarantine. The regulation restricts the movement of hardwood firewood, nursery stock, and other ash products. Additional counties will be quarantined if new discoveries are made this summer.

EAB was discovered near Detroit in 2002 and is thought to have arrived in North America in wooden shipping crates from Asia. The insect kills ash trees when the larvae eat the layer of soft wood that supplies the tree with water and nutrients. Millions of ash trees have already been destroyed in 15 states and two Canadian provinces.

To help slow the spread of EAB in Wisconsin, people are urged to not move hardwood firewood out of quarantine areas and to be careful about firewood movement in general. Logs and timber products are moved under strict regulatory guidelines and are typically not the cause of new infestations. Firewood moved by the general public continues to be the largest concern regarding new EAB infestations.

For more information about EAB, including the most current maps of quarantine and survey areas, visit www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov.