



Frequently Asked Questions/Answers on Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

- 1) **What is the emerald ash borer?** It is a small, shiny green beetle ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch long x $\frac{1}{8}$ inch wide).
- 2) **What does EAB eat?** Hosts are species (and cultivars) of ash in the genus *Fraxinus*. Hosts include green ash (e.g., 'Marshall Seedless', 'Patmore', and 'Summit'), white ash (e.g., Autumn Purple®) black ash, blue ash, and pumpkin ash. Manchurian and Chinese ash trees are primary hosts in its homeland [Eurasia]. Mountain ashes (*Sorbus* species) are NOT hosts.
- 3) **Where is EAB from?** This beetle is native to Asia and is found in China and Korea. It also has been reported in Japan, Mongolia, the Russian Far East, and Taiwan. EAB arrived in the United States sometime before 2002 in wood packing materials.
- 4) **How did it get to Iowa?** Most EAB infestations in the United States have been started by people unknowingly moving infested firewood, nursery plants, or sawmill logs. The adult beetle also can fly short distances (2 to 5 miles).
- 5) **Should I be concerned about EAB?** Yes. It kills ash trees, usually in 2-4 years. In the Midwest, millions of ash trees have been killed by EAB since 2002. There are about 500 ash trees on public property in Altoona, and an unknown number of ash trees on private properties.
- 6) **How do I know if I have an ash tree in my yard?** Two sources to check on tree identification are:

<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=1482>

http://www.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/iowa_trees/tree_id.html
- 7) **How do I know if my ash tree is infested?** Look for the following symptoms:
 - a) Thinning or dying branches in the top of the tree
 - b) Water sprouts (suckers) halfway up the trunk
 - c) Feeding notches on edge of leaflets
 - d) Woodpecker feeding sites/many bark flakes on lawn
 - e) S-shaped feeding galleries under dead bark
 - f) D-shaped exit holes ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch diameter)
- 8) **Who can help me determine if my tree is infested?** Contact local authorities if you suspect EAB in your tree:
 - a) Polk County ISU Extension Office, 515-957-5760
 - b) Iowa DNR Forestry, 319-523-2216
 - c) City of Altoona Parks Department, 515-967-5203
- 9) **Who should be thinking about treating ash trees?** If you are a homeowner within 15 miles of a known infested area you can evaluate the health of your tree and if it is healthy you can

consider treatment next year. If you are not in a known infested area we do not recommend treatment at this time.

- 10) **Ash Borer Management Options** (www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM2084.pdf)
- a) Ash trees can be protected with insecticide applied by a commercial pesticide applicator or the homeowner. Trees must be healthy, vigorously growing, and valuable to your landscape. The tree is only protected as long as the insecticide continues to be applied – once the applications stop so does the protection. Before applying an insecticide be aware of any potential environmental impacts of the product:
http://www.emeraldashborer.info/files/Potential_Side_Effects_of_EAB_Insecticides_FAQ.pdf
 - b) Most of the treatments must be done each year for the life of the tree. Treatment may *not* be effective due to past injuries to the tree, age of the tree, soil moisture, soil compaction, and other site and environmental factors.
 - c) Preventive treatments are most effective. Infested trees with less than 40% dieback of the crown *might be* saved.
 - d) Preventive treatments for EAB are NOT recommended until a confirmed EAB site is 15 miles away. Treatment outside this risk zone is not prudent. This recommendation comes from EAB researchers at Michigan State University.
 - e) Systemic insecticides require time and active tree growth for distribution in the ash tree. **Most products must be applied in early spring to be effective.** An additional fall treatment may be required for larger trees.
 - f) Homeowner treatments are effective for ash trees up to 25 inches in circumference (8 inches diameter). Larger tree treatments should be made by a commercial pesticide applicator with experience in treating trees.
 - g) Canopy sprays are NOT recommended by ISU Extension and Outreach because of limited effectiveness, the need for specialized equipment, spray drift, and possible adverse effects to nontarget organisms.
- 11) **If I am contacted by a pesticide applicator to treat ash trees for EAB at this time, what course should I take?** Mid to late summer is TOO LATE to apply a treatment. Next spring (mid-April to mid-May), IF you live within 15 miles of a confirmed EAB infested site, get an estimate for the treatment. Try to obtain at least one additional estimate before any work is done. IF you live outside the risk zone, thank the applicator for showing interest and keep the company information on file.
- 12) **Where else has EAB been found in Iowa?** EAB has been found in six Iowa counties:
- a) Allamakee –northeast Iowa
 - b) Des Moines – southeast Iowa
 - c) Jefferson – southeast Iowa
 - d) Cedar – northeast Iowa
 - e) Union – southwest Iowa
 - f) Black Hawk – northeast Iowa
- 13) **Now that EAB has come to Iowa, is there some plan to manage/contain this pest?** Yes, a detailed plan has been developed by collaborative agencies. This plan provides the stepwise actions to be taken to contain the pest, and the agencies responsible for the various anticipated actions. The EAB Response Plan and other current Iowa information about EAB are given at: www.extension.iastate.edu/pme/EmeraldAshBorer.html

- 14) **What does an EAB quarantine mean?** A quarantine by state and U.S. agriculture departments means that hardwood firewood, ash logs, and wood chips cannot be moved out of the area without a permit. Homeowners must not remove their ash tree or firewood from their tree to an area outside the quarantine. Tree removal companies must not haul logs or firewood outside the quarantine area unless inspected and treated as required by the regulations.
- 15) **What should a homeowner or tree care company do with ash trees cut down in or near the infested area?** At this time the preferred disposal method is to use the wood within the quarantined area. Altoona residents can dispose of wood waste (twigs, brush, limbs, and branches) free of charge at the City brush drop off site with proof of residency. Contractors or homeowners may take their tree debris to the Metro Waste Authority at the current landfill per pound fees.
- 16) **What programs are available for replacement of Ash trees?** The City of Altoona sponsors an annual Residential Tree Program that pre-sells trees in February for pick up at the April Arbor Day celebration. The program offers 4 different tree varieties that change every year for a cost of \$25 per tree. The trees are typically 1.5 to 2-inch caliper trees. MidAmerican Energy and the Iowa DNR co-sponsor the Plant Some Shade Program which offers trees at a reduced cost. Program details can be found at http://www.midamericanenergy.com/ee/ia_res_shade.aspx
- 17) **What are recommended replacements for ash trees?** The Iowa DNR provides the following list of trees:
[http://www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/forestry/Forest%20Health/species%20list%20\(links\).pdf](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/forestry/Forest%20Health/species%20list%20(links).pdf)
- 18) **Where can I find current information about EAB on the Internet?** Sites to gather current information about this exotic pest include:
- National site: www.emeraldashborer.info
 - ISU Extension site: www.extension.iastate.edu/pme/EmeraldAshBorer.html
 - IDALS site: www.IowaTreePests.com
 - IDNR site:
www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/Forestry/ForestHealth/EmeraldAshBorer.aspx