

F2240 (June 2024)



# Emerald Ash Borer

## *What's the Plan for Your Community?*

**Joseph Zeleznik**, NDSU Extension Forester

**Emerald Ash Borer** (EAB) will have a huge impact on ash trees throughout North Dakota in our native forests, shelterbelts and communities.

This guide is for city managers, public works directors, local tree board members and others interested in and responsible for managing public trees.

There are many different management approaches for planning for and dealing with an EAB infestation, and each community's response will be unique. This guide gives a broad overview of what to consider and the decisions the city will have to make.



# Whose tree is it?

Ownership depends on location — and city ordinances.

Boulevards and the trees in them are usually owned by the city — but not always.

The city's right-of-way ordinance should clearly distinguish the line between private property and public property. It should also outline who is responsible for tree maintenance, removal and replacement.

Sometimes trees on private property pose a risk to public infrastructure. Sometimes it's not clear whose responsibility it is to minimize risk. Regardless, prevention is key.

A tree ordinance will outline the responsibilities that the city has as well as those of property owners. Does your community have a tree ordinance?



**Does your community have a tree ordinance?**



# Be Proactive

## And, run the numbers.

There are many potential responses to an EAB infestation, including removal and replacement, treatment or doing nothing. Your city's response to EAB should be based on hard data. A tree inventory is crucial for decision-making.

- How many public ash trees are there?
- How big are they?
- Are they in good health and structurally sound?
- Are they located under power lines or places that don't provide much benefit?

Insecticide treatments for EAB prevention are highly effective. While they can be expensive, cutting trees down can be even more costly.



## Do the math.

Do the math. What would it cost your community to remove all its ash trees? What's the price of treating all of the city's ash trees? Or perhaps half of the ash trees? Treating trees can buy time and spread out the costs of removal.

Most communities will opt for some combination of treatments and removal-and-replacement. Keep in mind the benefits provided by healthy trees versus the cost of not having trees, along with the risks of doing nothing. The decisions may be difficult.



# Food for Thought

Disposal of wood debris will be an issue for the community and local residents. What will you do with the debris from removed trees? There may be quarantines that restrict the movement of debris in order to minimize the inadvertent spread of EAB.



Begin to diversify now so that your city's urban forest will be more resilient to future pests.



## Has Emerald Ash Borer made it to your Community?

Do you think ash trees in your community might be infested with EAB? Contact the North Dakota Department of Agriculture Report a Suspect Ash Tree.



For more information on EAB, contact your county Extension agent or one of the following:

Charles Elhard, ND Department of Agriculture, 701-220-0485, [reportapest@nd.gov](mailto:reportapest@nd.gov)

Guido Frega, ND Forest Service, 701-809-4386, [guido.frega@ndsu.edu](mailto:guido.frega@ndsu.edu)

Joe Zeleznik, NDSU Extension, 701-231-8143, [joseph.zeleznik@ndsu.edu](mailto:joseph.zeleznik@ndsu.edu)

NDSU

EXTENSION



The NDSU Extension does not endorse commercial products or companies even though reference may be made to tradenames, trademarks or service names.

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost for Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, NDSU Main Campus, 701-231-7708, [ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu). This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881.