

Emerald Ash Borer Update

by Dave Scharfenberger, Board Certified Master Arborist WI-0131B

If you have followed our newsletter or reports in the media, you should know that there is a serious threat to our ash trees. Emerald ash borer (EAB) has killed over 20 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. Ash trees make up 20% of our urban forest and their loss will be very significant. It takes a long time to grow a tree!

EAB is now just outside of our state in northern Illinois. The state of Illinois is going to be cutting down infested trees in zones where they have found high numbers of EAB. This will not be mandatory, it is only if people want their ash trees removed and only if the ash has EAB. This is different from what other states have done and seems like it might be a good strategy to help slow the spread of EAB.

All previous efforts to eradicate this foreign invader have failed. A lot of money has been spent without stopping the spread of EAB. The real answers lie in research because even though it was discovered five years ago, we still do not know enough about the insect. We are not able to find it in the early stages and do not know how to stop it from spreading.

If you have key, important ash trees in your yard, we can take steps to protect them. However, for many landscapes, planting to replace the ash is a way to create a variety of trees and may be the best way to go. Be sure to call your Wachtel Tree Science & Service certified arborist to get all of your questions answered.