



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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PRESS RELEASE

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EMERALD ASH BORER DISTRIBUTION EXPANDING IN CONNECTICUT

New Haven, CT - The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) announced today that the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) (EAB) infestation, largely centered in New Haven County, has rapidly expanded into Fairfield, Hartford, Litchfield, and Middlesex Counties and has now been detected in a total of 38 towns. The new towns where the beetle has been detected this year include: Ansonia, Branford, Bristol, Clinton, Cromwell, Derby, Durham, Litchfield, Meriden, New Haven, North Haven, Orange, Plainville, Rocky Hill, Seymour, Shelton, Thomaston, Trumbull, Wallingford, West Haven, Wolcott, Woodbridge, Woodbury. The insects were previously found in Beacon Falls, Bethany, Cheshire, Hamden, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Newtown, North Branford, Oxford, Prospect, Sherman, Southbury, Southington, and Waterbury in 2012 or 2013. Additional detections are anticipated.

The emerald ash borer is a destructive insect and has been responsible for the death and decline of tens of millions of ash trees from Colorado and the mid-west to New England and south to Georgia. Ash makes up about 4% to 15% of Connecticut's forests and represents about 2-3% of the urban trees in many communities.

"Unfortunately, we are now seeing a lot of dead and dying ash in New Haven County and more ash trees will die as a result of this expanding infestation" said State Entomologist Kirby C. Stafford III. When EAB is found, municipalities and homeowners can assess their ash trees and plan for the impact of this beetle. High value trees and lightly infested trees can be treated with systemic insecticides to protect them against the emerald ash borer. Untreated ash trees will be lost and can die within 2-3 years once infested. Ash trees quickly decline and become hazardous, requiring removal, depending upon their location and risk to people and property.

"The spread of EAB within our state poses a severe and imminent threat to ash trees on both private and public property," said Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Commissioner Rob Klee. "It is critical for property owners to assess the condition of their ash trees and make decisions to treat trees with appropriate chemicals to try to save them or to remove trees that pose safety risks. We also strongly encourage property owners to utilize only licensed and insured professionals to either treat or remove their

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ash trees.”

Many EAB detections have been made by monitoring the ground-nesting, native wasp (*Cerceris fumipennis*), which hunts many wood-boring beetles, including the emerald ash borer. The wasp is an effective “biological surveillance” survey tool and does not sting people or pets according to Dr. Claire E. Rutledge, who runs the CAES survey program. In addition, purple detection traps have been set across Middlesex, Tolland, Windham, and New London counties by Thomas Worthley, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System. The surveillance programs are supported by the USDA-APHIS-PPQ.

In Connecticut, quarantine had previously been established that regulates the movement of ash logs, ash materials, ash nursery stock, and hardwood firewood from within Fairfield, Hartford, Litchfield and New Haven Counties to any area outside of those counties to help slow the spread of the beetle. The quarantine currently applies to only those four counties and mirrors a federal quarantine also imposed on the four counties.

With the detection of EAB in Middlesex County and rapid expansion of the EAB infestation to five of the state’s eight counties, CAES plans to remove the state internal quarantine by adding Middlesex, New London, Tolland, and Windham counties to the existing EAB quarantine. Until that time, the current state and federal EAB quarantine is still in effect. A public hearing will be held in August at the CAES Griswold Research Center, 190 Sheldon Road, Griswold, CT 06351, on a date still to be determined.

Regulations also are in effect regulating the movement of firewood from out-of-state into Connecticut or within Connecticut. These regulations were put in place to ensure that other invasive insects, not just the emerald ash borer, are not carried into Connecticut through the shipment of firewood. These regulations are not influenced by the new EAB detections.

Detailed information about the current quarantine and the firewood regulations can be found at www.ct.gov/deep/eab or www.ct.gov/caes.

The emerald ash borer is a regulated plant pest under federal (7 CFR 301.53) and state (CT Gen. Statute Sec. 22-84-5d, e, and f) regulations. For more information about the EAB, please visit the following website: www.emeraldashborer.info. A fact sheet providing guidelines on the treatment of ash trees to protect them from EAB is also available at www.ct.gov/caes.

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