

Before the Bug Comes to Town

Community Readiness Planning for Emerald Ash Borer in the Midwest

For communities where ash is a large part (>10%) of the urban forest. Check with your State Department of Agriculture and State Department of Natural Resources to determine if there are any specific readiness plans or tools available.

The following provides a general outline to aid communities in preparing for EAB:

1. Inventory

- a. **Trees / value / costs** ●
Get a handle on the number of ash and ultimate cost of removal and replanting.
- b. **People** ●
- c. **Equipment** ●
- d. **Budget** ●
- e. **Roles / authorities** ●

2. Detection

- a. **Become familiar with EAB signs / symptoms** ●
- b. **Cooperate with state agencies involved in surveys** ●
Provide "sacrificial trees" for trap tree program.
- c. **Delineate high risk areas** ●
- d. **Institute internal surveys** ●
 - i. **Determine areas to survey**
 - ii. **Conduct debarking surveys**
 - iii. **Visually inspect ash for EAB signs/symptoms**

3. Ash Management

- a. **Determine control / treatment policies** ●
Are there significant trees that warrant treatment? If so, when will treatment begin?
- b. **Prepare a sanitation program** ●
Review and revise the nuisance ordinance that currently may only apply to trees with Dutch elm disease.
- c. **Institute adaptive maintenance** ●
Minimize investments in ash by completing basic versus extensive pruning.
- d. **Establish removal contracts** ●
- e. **Design debris management / wood utilization strategies** ●
- f. **Decide on ash reduction strategies (if any)**
 - i. **Stop planting ash** ●
In most communities, ash has been over planted in the past, currently comprising a high percentage of the street tree population.
 - ii. **Replace poor quality, high maintenance ash** ●
Look for opportunities to replace ash with something else sooner (in the cases with a lot of deadwood or under wires).
 - iii. **Reduce the number of ash (attrition)** ●
Look for opportunities to phase ash out of the system (e.g. if a construction project will require the removal of either a row of oak or ash, sacrifice the ash).
- g. **Determine replanting strategies** ●

4. Communication / Education

a. Inform policymakers ●

Regularly update elected officials as to the threat level, consequences, and actions being taken.

b. Utilize media relations ●

Take advantage of the fact that the media will be interested – use the opportunity to educate them about prevention, identification, and current activities.

c. Inform the public ●

Post information on the city's website, in community centers, and in neighborhood newsletters. Accept invitations to speak at community association meetings about trees. Utilize cable TV.

d. Train staff ●

Incorporate EAB into other training, including EAB identification, signs and symptoms, and lifecycle.

e. Educate contractors ●

Utilize mailing lists to provide EAB information and, when possible, include training.

5. Budget

a. Identify budget needs ●

b. Explore alternative funding sources ●

6. Legislation

a. Develop relationships ●

b. Share information ●

- First priority
- Second priority
- Third priority

How about firewood movement?

Compiled from information from the following:

- ◆ Minneapolis' "Beat the Beetle" Program – presentation at MnSTAC Forum
- ◆ Michigan's Guide to Communities on EAB Preparedness
- ◆ Wisconsin's EAB Toolkit for Communities
- ◆ Illinois' EAB Community Readiness Workbook