

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Launches Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Program

More than 30,000 boulevard ash trees and tens of thousands of ash trees located in park properties and natural areas are destined for infestation by Emerald Ash Borer.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is launching a campaign to help Minneapolis residents understand the changes that Emerald Ash Borer will soon bring to city's urban forest.

Boulevard ash trees around Minneapolis will be wrapped with informational green ribbon at various community events and on residential boulevards throughout the summer. The ribbon and accompanying signs alert residents that, "Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Kills Ash Trees" and that "EAB is in Minneapolis!" The signs also give residents information about the MPRB's tree canopy – or tree cover – replacement plan and share the Park Board's EAB website information.

The ash trees that will be wrapped with green ribbon have not been identified as being infested with EAB. However, as EAB is quickly spreading across the metro area, it is inevitable that all ash trees will become infested with EAB and eventually die, including the more than 30,000 boulevard ash trees and tens of thousands of ashes located in park properties and natural areas such as along the Mississippi corridor.

This approaching loss of ash trees will cause a drastic change to Minneapolis' tree population and has led the MPRB to develop a proactive canopy replacement plan that provides for the scheduled replacement of ash trees.

The MPRB's canopy replacement plan reduces the impact of canopy loss while growing a diverse and strong forest for future generations. The MPRB intends to lessen the impact of losses by replacing a small percentage of ash trees at a time. Rather than planting the same type of replacement tree across the park system, the MPRB will plant two or three different tree types (for example, oak, honeylocust, ginkgo) on any given street block. Minneapolis residents with boulevard ash tree adjacent to their property may request to have it replaced by contacting the MPRB. There is no charge to replace publically owned ash trees.

The awareness campaign kicks off at the June 23 Open Streets Mpls event on Lyndale Avenue South. The ribbons will be applied on June 21st in preparation for the event. EAB awareness ash tree ribboning will occur on ash trees that are growing on other Open Streets Mpls events as well as other community events throughout the summer.

For more information on the MPRB's canopy replacement plan, visit www.minneapolisparcs.org/eab