

The latest on Emerald Ash Borer strategy

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Since the emerald ash borer (EAB) was discovered earlier this year in St. Paul, the Forestry Division of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has taken actions to moderate the spread of the invasive beetles. While it seems likely that EAB will have a devastating effect on the area's ash tree population over time, Forestry personnel are working to minimize the environmental, economic and aesthetic impact on the city's urban forest.

Ongoing measures to slow the spread of the EAB include working with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to determine the extent of the beetles' presence in the city. Because trimming or removing damaged ash trees during summer months when EAB are active could cause the beetles to spread, such work has been delayed until the beetles turn dormant in the fall. The transportation of all firewood and any ash wood outside of Hennepin and Ramsey counties has been banned by a state quarantine. Because EAB can also spread via larger woodchips no woodchips from ash trees have been included in the free woodchips that have been made available to the public.

This fall the Forestry Division will start the removal process of damaged and defective ash trees in the city. The Fraxinus Phloem Reduction (FPR) Program – named for the tree's genus and the part of the tree destroyed by EAB larvae – will begin sometime after Labor Day.

While some chemical treatments of ash tree may have high success rates, the cost of the lengthy treatment regimen is prohibitive for the 30,000 ash trees on boulevards. Property owners who wish to treat boulevard ash trees may do so at their own expense, and must use a private contractor that has received a permit from the Forestry Division to ensure the treatments are done properly. A list of such contractors is available upon request.

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