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DATCP SURVEY FOR EMERALD ASH BORER BEGINS

Mick Skwarok, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

MADISON – The search for emerald ash borer (EAB) in Wisconsin takes a new turn Thursday as state and local crews start felling ash trees in a handful of locations across southern and northeastern Wisconsin. The work marks the latest development in the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's EAB program, an ongoing and expanding effort dedicated to preparing for a possible EAB infestation, detecting the insect should it be present, and managing or eradicating an infestation.

Beginning Dec. 14, workers will start to fell approximately 1,400 ash trees (sample trees) and check for signs of an EAB infestation. On another roughly 4,400 ash trees (detection trees), workers will remove a ring of bark around the base of the tree in a process called girdling, but leave those trees standing as "EAB bait" until they are taken down next fall and winter. The girdled trees act as a lure, making it easier to detect the beetle if it's in the area.

"The reality with emerald ash borer is that the earlier you can detect the pest, the better chance you have at stopping it in its tracks," said Adrian Barta, EAB program coordinator with DATCP. "Until researchers give us more options, this survey is the best tool we have to locate an early infestation."

The survey area includes all or parts of 30 counties. They are: Adams, Brown, Calumet, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Door, Fond du Lac, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Juneau, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marquette, Milwaukee, Oconto, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Sauk, Shawano, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca and Winnebago.

At this time, the survey is concentrating on trees along state, county and municipal roads. Some municipalities have identified ash trees to be used for the survey and will be working with DATCP to sample those trees. Survey trees are small trees, about 10 inches in diameter or less and, when-

ever possible, are already stressed by disease or injury.

Surveys will be conducted by eight two-person teams. Each team will be responsible for felling the designated trees and peeling the bark from the trunk and major limbs. It's expected that each team



will be able to sample four to seven trees a day, depending on the amount of time it takes to travel between survey locations. Survey work will begin in four locations in southeast, two locations in south central, and two locations in northeast Wisconsin.

There are an estimated 717 million ash trees in Wisconsin forests. In urban settings, ash varieties represent about 30 percent of street trees, with countless more used in yards and for other landscaping.

Wisconsin's Emerald Ash Borer Internet Portal Available

Wisconsin residents have a new resource to find emerald ash borer information on the Web through the combined efforts of the Department of Natural Resources, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and DATCP. The Internet portal – <http://emeraldashborer.wi.gov> – is a gateway for people looking for information about EAB, especially from a Wisconsin perspective.

"The latest news regarding the ash tree survey, quarantines, and other pertinent information will be posted on the new portal, and I urge everyone to check it out,"

Barta said. "Arming yourself with the skills to identify an ash tree, recognizing the signs and symptoms of an EAB infestation, and knowing who to contact if you have a concern are important steps to keeping Wisconsin free of EAB, or stopping an infestation from spreading if it shows up."

The emerald ash borer, an exotic beetle native to Asia, has been responsible for the loss of an estimated 25 million ash trees in the United States since its introduction. The beetle was first detected in Detroit, Mich., in 2002. As of this summer, EAB has been identified in several Chicago suburbs in Cook and Kane counties. Federal quarantines were enacted Dec. 1, 2006, to restrict the movement of hardwood firewood, including ash, and other ash products such as ash nursery stock and green lumber or any other ash materials, out of those infested states.

DATCP tree surveys will be conducted in the following areas on Thursday, Dec. 14, beginning at 10:00 a.m. At least one tree will be felled, then peeled, at each location. An additional tree(s) also will be girdled at each site.

Please contact the person listed below for on-site information regarding the survey on that day.

General inquiries may be directed to Mick Skwarok, (608) 224-4745 or (608) 219-1492.

Brown County

Location: L.H. Barkhausen Waterfowl Preserve, 2024 Lakeview Dr., Suamico (Directions available at <http://www.co.brown.wi.us/Parks/>)

Contact: Chris Lettau, (608) 220-7412

Dane County

Location: DATCP grounds; 2811 Agriculture Dr., Madison (Third tier parking near wooded area on northeast side of building)

Contact: Jane Larson, (608) 212-3094

Waukesha County

Location: Woodfield Park – South, Waukesha (Entrance to parking area off of Harris Highland Dr.)

Contact: Mick Skwarok, (608) 219-1492