

City of Upper Arlington EAB Management Plan

Introduction

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an introduced pest that is killing ash trees in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Ontario. Since its discovery in Detroit, Michigan in 2002, the borer has spread, killing virtually all ash trees in its path. The City of Upper Arlington must prepare for and manage for the arrival of this pest on three fronts -- street trees, park/public trees, and trees on private property.

While nobody can determine when the insect will arrive in Upper Arlington, our best estimate is that it will reach Upper Arlington in 2015 from northwest Ohio, with ash mortality following two to four years later. Because the EAB can travel easily in firewood and nursery stock, it is possible that it will arrive much sooner despite state and federal quarantines of infested regions. For example, EAB is currently in several locations in Delaware County. The Upper Arlington Tree Commission and City staff agree that proactive measures should be taken before an infestation occurs, to prevent a crisis in public safety, budgeting, and logistics.

As of 2006, approximately 700 (4.6%) of the City's 15,000 street trees are ash. This figure includes inventoried specimens, and an estimate of sizeable ashes in wooded areas in public rights of way. About 13% of the inventoried ashes are rated in poor condition, 33% are in fair condition, and 54% are in good condition. Similar data for park and private ash trees is not available.

The following elements of the City's EAB management plan have been adopted, and are subject to periodic revision as new information about the borer is available. This plan is also subject to change should state or federal policies dictate. The Upper Arlington Division of Parks & Forestry is the lead agency responsible for plan implementation. Working with the Upper Arlington Tree Commission, the Division will provide public education/information regarding EAB as a routine service, and an annual report to City Council will be prepared.

Street Trees

1. The City will gradually remove and replace native ashes in street rights of way. The removals will begin in 2006, and poor condition trees will be removed first. Up to 10% of ashes will be removed annually, enabling the City to phase out ashes over an eight to ten year period. All adjacent residents will be notified of planned action. Ashes in good condition will not be removed unless necessary, and not until the fifth or sixth year of this process.
2. Removals will be dispersed over neighborhoods to lessen impact on residents, aesthetics, and property values.
3. Requests from adjacent residents will be honored when possible. This includes residents who request removal of trees, as well as those who request that ashes be retained (in expectation that protective treatments will be applied by the resident). City code also includes an appeals process for residents.
4. Protective pesticide treatments may be effective, and may be applied at residents' discretion and expense. The City does not plan to treat street trees. Treated trees will be removed if treatments fail and EAB infests the tree.

5. Ash trees that are removed will be replaced. Species diversity will be a planting objective to better protect our community's trees in the future, and planting will occur spring and fall per the City's standard operating procedures.

Park Trees

1. There are many specimen ash trees in City parks, as well as thousands of ashes in wooded park areas. No inventory of park trees exists.
2. The City will cooperate with The Ohio Department of Agriculture to establish trap trees as needed in City parks.
3. Specimen trees will be monitored. Because these trees are generally young and small, proactive removal will be unnecessary, as City staff can remove these trees once infestation occurs.
4. Ash trees in wooded areas will be left alone. These trees will die once EAB arrives, but will be left in the woods to fall and decompose unless they present a hazard, in which case they will be felled and left in the woods.
5. Specimen ash trees will be replaced. In wooded areas, natural regeneration will play a significant role in reforesting parkland, but invasive/non-native plants will create challenges.

Trees on Private Property

1. There are many thousands of ash trees large and small on private property in Upper Arlington. No reliable inventory exists, and ash density varies by neighborhood.
2. Property owners are urged to monitor the EAB's movements. **The decision to treat, remove, or retain private trees rests with the property owner.** Residents should consider many variables when evaluating options, including tree size, location, and condition; access to the tree; potential targets should the tree fail; property value; shade, heating, and cooling values; treatment techniques, efficacy, and costs; proximity of EAB infestation; and intangible values.
3. The City will enforce the relevant sections of C.O. Chapter 907 through its Code Compliance program should it receive complaints about hazardous private trees. Staff is always vigilant for private trees that threaten public improvements or the street right of way, and this will not change. Private trees that are a threat to private property will be inspected only as complaints are received.
4. It would be prudent for residents to establish a relationship with an ISA Certified Arborist now in the event that ash evaluation, treatment, or removal is desired in the future. Contractors should be able to provide proof of liability insurance and worker's compensation coverage. The City also encourages residents to replace trees lost with species appropriate for the site, or to plant new trees in advance of EAB infestation and ash removal as a way of preserving the tree lined streets and beautiful neighborhoods that typify Upper Arlington.