

# **EMERALD ASH BORER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

## **CITY OF OCONTO, WISCONSIN**

### **UNITED STATES**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This management plan has been written due to the pending infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer, an insect that has killed over 20 million trees in neighboring states and has now been discovered in numerous counties in Wisconsin.

This plan will serve as a recommendation guide for dealing with this insect and dying ash trees on public city property in future years. City of Oconto residents may also want to use this plan as a reference for ash trees on their property, although the city is not responsible for removal or associated costs.

Trees, parks, and other green space areas contribute greatly to the quality of life in the City of Oconto. Residents view trees and their value as an important part of the community. They give character to neighborhoods and yards, help cool our homes, and provide for residents interaction with nature, relaxation, and recreation in ways that enhance a sense of community. According to our current tree inventory:

- A total of 2069 trees are currently identified within the City's street trees, right-of-ways, and parks.
- A total of approximately 400 publically owned are ash trees.
- Approximately 20% of the City of Oconto public trees are ash.

In the event that all of the above ash trees would have to be removed due to extensive invasion of the EAB, the cost associated with this major event would be approximately as follows:

#### **ALL ASH TREES (Parks, Streets, Right-of-Ways)**

- Removal: \$300 each
- Replanting/Restoration: \$200 each
- Total cost for removal and replanting: \$180,000
  - 400 trees @ \$300 = \$120,000 for removal
  - 300 trees @ \$200 = \$60,000 for replanting with other species of trees)
  - (Note: It is estimated that about 75% of the removed trees would be replaced.)

#### **PLAN ADMINISTRATION**

The implementation of the EAB Management Plan for the City of Oconto will be under the supervision of the Director of Public Works and Parks and Recreation Director. The City of Oconto Forestry Committee will serve as an advisory board. The prime City contacts (in the event EAB is found within the city) should be:

Jeremy Wusterbarth  
Director of Public Works  
City of Oconto  
[jeremy@cityofoconto.com](mailto:jeremy@cityofoconto.com)  
920-834-7725  
920-373-2408

John Bostedt  
Parks and Recreation Director  
City of Oconto  
[ocontoparks@cityofoconto.com](mailto:ocontoparks@cityofoconto.com)  
920-834-7706  
920-373-4714

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan is to protect public safety and to budget for the impending costs relating to the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation.

By implementing the provisions of this management plan, the City of Oconto is attempting to mitigate the disruption of its local urban forest caused by the pending infestation of the EAB. Taking a moderate approach to this pending infestation will enable the City to address the needs in an efficient and effective manner.

The City of Oconto must prepare to manage this pest on three fronts: street and right-of-way trees, park trees, and trees on private property. Therefore, this plan will apply throughout the city on all public properties where ash trees are currently growing as well as on private property where ash trees may create a hazardous condition for public right-of-ways or other public properties.

With the discovery of the EAB in Wisconsin, there is an increased need to adequately prepare the City of Oconto for possible infestation. A moderate approach to the Emerald Ash Borer Local Management Plan will enable the city to:

- Continue to keep the master tree inventory current.
- Develop an ash tree reduction program.
- Develop tree replanting recommendations.
- Remove ash trees as deemed appropriate and replant other species as appropriate.
- Work within the adopted yearly budget relating to forestry initiatives.
- Train personnel to recognize EAB infested trees.
- Notify city residents who may have an ash tree which may cause a hazardous condition and proceed as outlined in Chapter 4 of the Municipal Code of Ordinances of Oconto, Wisconsin.
- Develop and strengthen community education and outreach.

## **WHAT IS THE EMERALD ASH BORER?**

The EAB is an exotic beetle that is tiny, metallic green, and bullet shaped. In the 1990s, this invasive insect traveled from east Asia to southeastern Michigan unintentionally concealed within solid wood packing materials routinely used for international cargo shipments.

Since its discovery in Detroit, Michigan in 2002, the EAB has been responsible for killing all ash trees within its path. Movements of nursery stock and firewood have been inadvertently responsible for the majority of new EAB introductions in the other states.

In the summer months, adult EAB beetles nibble the leaves of the ash trees, but do little damage. It is the larvae that are responsible for trees' decline and eventual death. Within one to three years, a tree can no longer circulate the nutrients it needs. It appears EAB infestation is always fatal. EAB infestation kills all varieties of North American ash trees (*Fraxinus*). Mountain ash is not a "true" ash and is not susceptible to infestation.

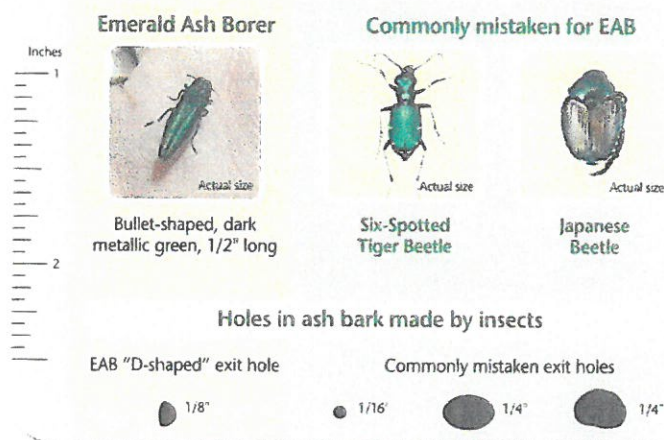
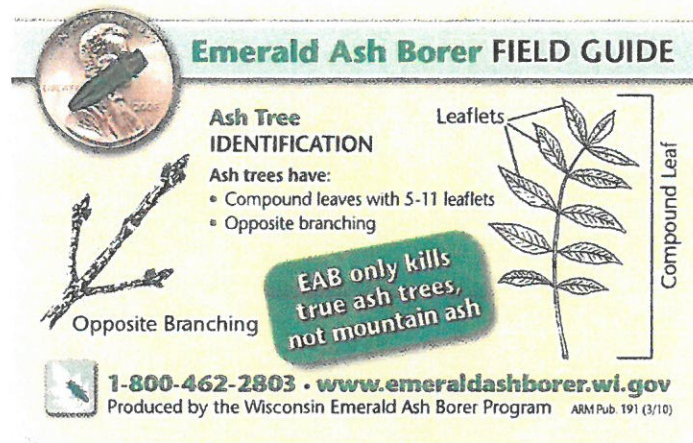
They have, and are currently killing millions of ash trees in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota, several other states, Ontario, Canada, and now in Wisconsin. Through 2007, more than 20 million ash trees were

killed in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana alone. To stay connected to the current status of the EAB infestation area visit [www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov](http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov).

The costs to communities impacted by the EAB have been considerable. In residential areas, tree removal and replacement is often necessary. The City of Oconto estimates that it costs approximately \$300 to remove an average sized (12"DBH) street ash tree while the cost of replacing a removed tree averages around \$200.

The City of Oconto should plan to distribute the costs associated with certain and massive tree death over a manageable time period, as well as lessen the social and economic impact that such an extensive loss will have on the quality of life in our community.

The card shown below is available through the state of Wisconsin Emerald Ash Borer Program, and gives an idea of what to look for when monitoring ash trees. Other symptoms are listed below.



### **SYMPTOMS OF EAB INFESTATION**

Be on the lookout for any ash tree showing general signs of decline. Look for:

- Epicormic sprouting (unusual branches produced from the tree's base)
- Dead or dying branches in the upper crown
- Yellow or off-color foliage during the growing season



Some more specific symptoms of EAB infestation include:

- D-shaped exit holes: When EAB adults emerge from beneath the bark, they create distinctive D-shaped exit holes.
- Vertical bark-splits: The feeding of EAB larvae often causes a 2-5 inch split in a tree's bark. In some cases, larval galleries can be seen beneath these splits.
- Increased woodpecker activity: Woodpeckers feed on EAB larvae. Woodpecker activity that removes patches of bark may be a sign of EAB infestation.
- Presence of Metallic Green Beetles: Adult EAB beetles are metallic green in color and are 3/8-1/2 inch in length and 1/16 inch in width – small enough to fit on a penny. If a beetle is found that fits this description, collect and preserve it in alcohol for identification. Contact Wisconsin's EAB hotline at 1-800-462-2803 or email photos to [DATCPEmeraldAshBorer@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPEmeraldAshBorer@wisconsin.gov).

### **WHAT IS THE CITY OF OCONTO DOING?**

The City of Oconto has been monitoring the status of the EAB and has taken the following steps:

- Obtained the EAB Toolkit for Wisconsin Communities from the DNR.
- Attended DNR and arborist workshops.
- Collected several pieces of useful educational material on EAB from various sources.
- Currently assessing staff, training, and equipment needs.
- Inspection of our ash tree inventory.
- Added educational material on EAB for residents on the City of Oconto website.

### **CITY OF OCONTO ACTION PLAN**

#### **Street Tree Pre-emptive Removal**

Approximately 10-15 ash street trees will be removed each year to reduce the number of ash trees within the city and will be replanted with a different species of tree.

As funding and time permit, ash trees in very poor, poor, or diseased condition along with trees under utility lines will be removed first, followed by ash trees in fair condition. These trees will be replanted with a diverse species of trees. Average cost for removal of an ash tree is approximately \$300. Cost of replanting a tree is approximately \$200.00, including the tree and planting costs. This replanting will be done in the fall of the year. It is the intent of the Management Plan to replace each ash tree in priority areas as one is removed. Some ash trees in non-priority areas, or those in areas already well forested, will not be replaced.

#### **Removal of Wood Chips**

Establishing a marshall yard for wood and wood chips: All trees 12" or smaller would be chipped with the appropriate chipper which would make chips 1"x1" or smaller. This meets the qualifications to destroy any EAB that may be in the wood.

### **Monitoring the EAB**

The city does not have enough personnel available to have a formal inspection program that would look at every ash tree on a regular basis. However, during the year, available personnel will monitor conditions of ash trees and randomly inspect trees for signs of EAB. Priority will be given to any tree to be in decline. If conditions warrant, a declining ash tree will be removed.

### **WHAT CAN RESIDENTS DO?**

There are several things that residents can do to assist in the effort to control the EAB.

**Know the signs and symptoms of EAB!** Be on the lookout where you live, work, and play.

**Know your trees!** Have an arborist assess your trees' health. If you have ash trees, now is the time to start thinking about whether or not you will use insecticide treatments to try to save them. Although this is a long-term investment and the cost of treatment can add up over the years, insecticides may be a good option for highly valued trees.

**Obtain chemical treatment options information!** Residents may choose the option of using chemical applications to potentially save a valuable ash tree on their property. An excellent resource outlining these options is entitled "Insecticide Options for Protecting Ash Trees from Emerald Ash Borer" and is a cooperative university effort from several of the universities of Illinois, Michigan State, Purdue, Ohio State, and UW-Extension. It may be obtained online at [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info). Another good reference is "Homeowner Guide to Emerald Ash Borer Insecticide Treatments" from the UW-Extension.

**Plant trees (but not ash)!** Most tree nurseries in our area have stopped stocking ash, since this is no longer a smart planting choice. The City of Oconto is looking to have a diverse variety of trees in the city.

**Don't move firewood!** EAB has spread quickly throughout north central US and into Canada not because it is highly mobile on its own, but because people have helped it. If you use firewood at home or when you travel purchase it on site.

If a city resident suspects EAB has infected a tree on either public property (parks/medians) or on private property (residences), they should call the City of Oconto Director of Public Works, Jeremy Wusterbarth, at 920-834-7725 or Parks and Recreation Director, John Bostedt, at 920-834-7706. Once the city has been contacted, we can make the proper contacts within the Department of Natural Resources to have the tree in question evaluated and appropriate action taken.

**Learn more!** Go to [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info) or [www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov](http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov) .  
Call the EAB Hotline at – 800-462-2803.



### **PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION**

In order to assist the residential homeowners of the city, a link to a copy of this Local Management Plan will be available on the City of Oconto website. This plan includes ...

- Numbers of actual ash trees found in Oconto.
- Emerald Ash Borer identification tips.
- Removal of unhealthy and other ash trees.
- The city's focus of street and park trees.
- Replanting efforts.

### **EAB UPDATES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Listed below are some excellent sites to obtain additional information regarding the EAB.

[www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov/](http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov/) – EAB portal for the State of Wisconsin

[www.entomology.wisc.edu/emeraldashborer/](http://www.entomology.wisc.edu/emeraldashborer/) – UW Extension, Dept. of Entomology website

[www.emeraldashborer.info/](http://www.emeraldashborer.info/) – EAB website administered by Michigan State University

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/foresthealth/emeraldashborer.html>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/UrbanForests/EABToolBox.html>

### **SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The City of Oconto Forestry Committee sincerely thanks the City of Dodgeville and its Director of Public Works, Mark Lee, for giving us permission to use their EAB plan in putting together this plan for the City of Oconto. This enabled us to develop our plan in an efficient and timely manner. Thank you.