



## City of Saint Paul, Minnesota

# Emerald Ash Borer Management Program

## Park Commission Update

February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Officials who have dealt with an EAB infestation elsewhere have warned that it is a fast moving event, meaning that once it takes hold in a city, it can complete its path of destruction in less than 20 years. For Saint Paul, it will mean the loss of all ash trees, not treated with pesticide, including approximately 26,000 (ca 2009) on street boulevards, and tens of thousands more on both public park land/open space and private property. It requires that the city, residents included, must be prepared to handle a glut of dying trees in a short timeframe, or suffer the consequences of thousands of dead and potentially hazardous trees in the landscape.

### Monitoring/Inspection

Routine monitoring/inspection for EAB have been an essential tool for extending the timeframe for managing a response to the infestation. Continued vigilance, coupled with sanitation efforts thus far, have likely contributed to the slower than anticipated spread of EAB in Saint Paul. However, this appears to be quickly changing with confirmed EAB findings now spread across 75% of the city (*see map attachment*), a 20% increase from early 2015.

Without an increase in staff since 2010, when only 3.5% of the city was considered infested, inspections of both public and private property have become increasingly difficult and time consuming. With an additional 20% of the city considered infested it would be impossible, with the area and number of trees in need of inspection, to complete a full survey of infested areas as has been done in the past.

#### 2015:

- Goal was to survey all infested areas in 2 months—it took almost 3 months to complete the survey—this does not include time spent following up on all of the abatement issues ordered.

#### 2016:

- Concentrate inspection efforts solely on public property ash trees
- Discontinue proactive inspections for EAB infested trees on private property (see also Education & Outreach section)—transition to reactive handling of dying ash on private property

### Sanitation

The prompt removal of EAB infested trees continued to be a priority in the City's management of EAB in 2015.

#### 2015:

- Removed 220 public trees from various infested areas (ROW & Parks)
- Condemned 326 private trees; a grand total of 1,036 condemned private trees since 2009.

#### 2016:

- Plan to remove publicly owned ash trees in EAB infested areas
- Discontinue the condemnation of private property ash trees infested with EAB

### Inventory

Management of EAB requires the general knowledge of current conditions of the urban forest, i.e., an up-to-date inventory to direct management needs. This information will be of increasing importance as the city may face liability issues with the remaining ash tree resource (currently ~19,000 on boulevards and parkways).

#### 2015:

- Temporary staff hired completed update of inventory in 2 districts

#### 2016:

- Recently hired temporary staff to continue update of inventory will goal of completing 2 districts

### Structured Removal

The Structured Removal program remained the same in 2015 as in previous years with the exception that with the increase in infested areas these removals now overlap—becoming structured removal of both infested and non-infested trees. This trend will continue to increase as infestations are found throughout the city.

**2015: (non-infested ROW Removal #'s)**

- 431 Structured Removal (2009-2015 total = 3,091) 291
- 291 "Other" (2009-2015 total = 2,125) includes individual dead trees, storm damaged, etc.
- 87 Construction (2009-2015 total = 974) includes PW RSVP, and other construction related removals
- **809 TOTAL** in 2015 (2009-2015 overall total = 6,190)

**2016:**

- Continue SR program & construction related removals to bring total # of removals on ROW to 1,000

**Insecticide Treatment**

The City's goal for insecticide treatments of public trees is to reduce EAB beetle and larvae populations in known infested areas.

**2015:**

- 912 total ash trees treated by private contractor
- 825 ROW trees treated (2011-2015 total = 1922)
- 87 Park trees treated (2011-2015 total = 179)

**2016:**

- Inject 900 public trees in 2016 (614 new and 286 re-treated)

**Reforestation**

Since the EAB Management Program began, the goal for reforestation has been to replant a minimum of one new tree for every ash tree lost. However, increases in funding have not kept pace with the quickly increasing costs of tree stock and installation. As an example, a budget of \$150,000 in 2010 would provide 968 trees installed, while in 2015 only 544 would be planted with that same budget.

**2015:**

- 1,950 total trees planted by Forestry (through private contractor)

**2016:**

- Strive to plant 1:1 for ash trees removed
- Exploring contract growing with local nurseries to decrease costs

**Outreach**

The continued spread of EAB throughout the city has made it impossible in a practical sense to monitor both public and private property, thus it is now more important than ever to provide outreach and education to citizens on what to expect regarding EAB on their own properties.

**2015:**

- EAB website ([www.stpaul.gov/eab](http://www.stpaul.gov/eab))
- Direct mail postcards
- Community newspapers
- Social media (Facebook: Saint Paul Natural Resources)
- Tree Advisory Panel (TAP)
- City Council & District Council offices
- Door Hangers
- Staff attendance at various public meetings, workshops, & events

**2016:**

- Continue to keep the public informed utilizing the same approaches as in 2015
- Expand citizen forestry programs including planting and maintaining city trees
- Forge partnerships with interested organizations or community groups to increase awareness of EAB and promote a healthy urban forest
- Introduce a high visibility EAB public awareness measure using tree flagging with a simple message and the EAB website, similar to what is done in Minneapolis
- Upon request, attend community meetings to present information on EAB and/or Urban Forestry
- Provide property owners additional information on EAB when public trees are marked for removal

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**Budget**

- 2016 EAB ROW & Parks Budgets were not approved for increases (budgets have not been increased since 2014).
- Continue to make the case for budget increases in following years so that EAB management goals peak along with anticipated infestation levels.