



NEWS

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TWO NEW COUNTIES FOUND TO BE INFESTED WITH THE EMERALD ASH BORER

Tree-killing beetle discovered at city parks in Champaign and Grundy Counties

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – A destructive pest that feasts on ash trees has been confirmed in Champaign and Grundy counties. The emerald ash borer (EAB) was discovered in Champaign County at Prairie Pine Campgrounds in Rantoul and in Grundy County at the Three Rivers Rest Area on I-80 in Morris, the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) announced today.

USDA staff discovered the Rantoul infestation on a purple sticky trap used to locate the presence of adult EAB, while IDOA staff collected a specimen from a trap placed in the Grundy County rest area. Both specimens were submitted to the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, which confirmed them as EAB.

“Grundy County is already under our EAB quarantine, which includes all or parts of 23 counties in the northern and central parts of Illinois,” Warren Goetsch, IDOA bureau chief of Environmental Programs, said. “However, Champaign County is not. Therefore, the quarantine boundaries will need to be adjusted.”

The quarantine is intended to prevent the accidental spread of the beetle. It prohibits the intrastate movement of potentially-contaminated wood products, including ash trees, limbs and branches and all types of firewood.

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The boundary adjustment will not be made until all purple traps have been harvested and analyzed, but Champaign County residents are urged to heed all quarantine guidelines as if they were officially quarantined.

The emerald ash borer is a small, metallic-green beetle native to Asia. Its larvae burrow into the bark of ash trees, causing the trees to starve and eventually die. While the beetle does not pose any direct risk to public health, it does threaten the ash tree canopy. Since the emerald ash borer was first confirmed in the Midwest in the summer of 2002, more than 25 million ash trees have been felled by the beetle.

Champaign and Grundy are the fifteenth and sixteenth Illinois counties with a confirmed EAB infestation. Previous detections were made in Boone, Bureau, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Iroquois, Kane, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, McHenry, McLean, Will and Winnebago counties.

The emerald ash borer is difficult to detect, especially in newly-infested trees. Citizens should watch for metallic-green beetles about half the diameter of a penny on or near ash trees that are showing signs of disease or stress. Other signs of infestation in ash trees include D-shaped holes in the bark of the trunk or branches and shoots growing from its base.

Anyone who suspects a tree has been infested is urged to contact either their county Extension office or village forester. For more information, visit www.IllinoisEAB.com on the internet.

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