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Bureau of Environmental Programs

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April 6, 2008

Dear local official:

The Illinois Department of Agriculture in cooperation with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), are using a purple sticky trap across Illinois and other states to look for emerald ash borer (EAB), an invasive pest that is deadly to ash trees. EAB is small and stealth-like in its behavior patterns and is extremely difficult to detect. If not controlled, EAB threatens to devastate the entire ash species in North America.

The traps are purple in color, sticky to the touch, and will hang in trees. They are intended to help officials find this cunningly deceptive creature in its adult life stage. The traps will be deployed during the months of April and May and will remain through Labor Day. Traps in your area will be set during the next two to three weeks.

The traps look like box-kites and will be hung in trees primarily in a 100-mile band on the outskirts of the last known southernmost infested site (Peru, IL). Essentially the area is a 100-mile wide arc across central and northwestern Illinois covering all or parts of 49 counties where approximately 2,700 of these traps will be placed. An additional 750 traps will be placed in the Chicagoland area and another 250 will be placed in southern Illinois in and around high risk areas such as tree nurseries and campgrounds. Department staff will remove all traps shortly after Labor Day.

The color purple is essential to the trap's effectiveness. The traps will also be baited with Manuka oil as an attractant to lure the beetle if it is in the area. It is important to note that these traps will not bring EAB to a non-infested site. They will simply let us know if it is already there.

Realizing that these traps may be an eye-sore to some and a source of entertainment to others, IDA officials are asking for the public's cooperation in ensuring that these traps are left alone to "do their thing." In order for these traps to work, they must be left alone. It's important that the public is aware of their purpose and help us keep them in place.

The presence of 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 their county Extension office. For more information, visit www.IllinoisEAB.com on the internet.

Thank you for your cooperation in this important environmental endeavor. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warren D. Goetsch".

Warren D. Goetsch, P.E.
Bureau Chief of Environmental Programs

What is that Purple Thing Hanging in the Tree?

It's a sticky trap that Illinois Department of Agriculture officials and cooperators are using to identify where the invasive pest, Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is. Approximately 2,700 are being placed in the 100 mile buffer zone outside the last known infested area. An additional 750 traps are being placed in the metro Chicagoland area while another 250 are being placed in high risk areas in the southern half of the state.

How does the trap work?

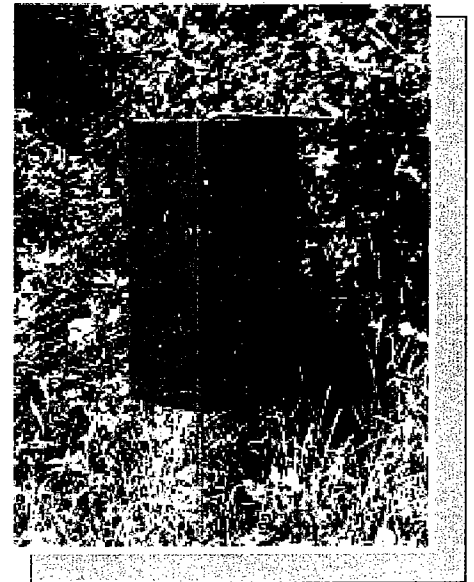
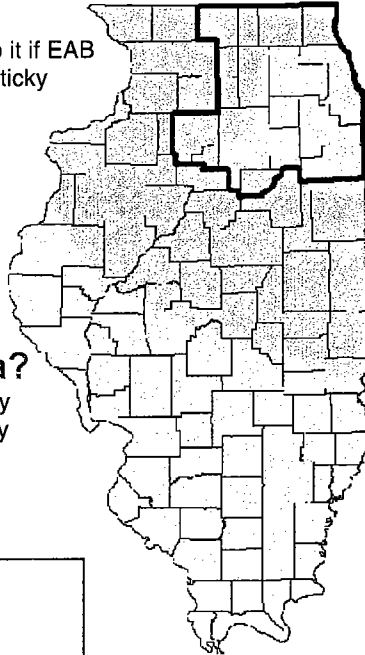
The trap uses Manuka oil as an attractant to lure the beetle to it if EAB already in the area. The surface of the trap is coated with a sticky material which causes the EAB to adhere to it.

How long will it be there?

The traps will be hung in early spring before the EAB flight season begins. The EAB flight season is from May through August. The traps will be removed systematically after the flight season is complete. Then the traps will be examined for the presence of EAB.

Will the traps bring EAB into the area?

No, the traps will not bring EAB into an area that is not already infested. It will simply help officials determine if EAB is already present in the area.



- State-issued EAB Quarantined Area
- Focus area in which IDA will be placing highest concentration of purple traps (approx. 2,700)
- Traps will be placed in highest risk areas, less concentration of traps.

What is Emerald Ash Borer?

A metallic green colored, wood-boring beetle that is lethal to all North American ash trees.

Where was it discovered?

In 2002 in the Detroit/Windsor area. It was first discovered in Illinois in June 2006 in Kane County.

How did it get here?

It most likely hitched a ride in wooden shipping material from Asia.

What does it do?

EAB chokes ash trees to death by devouring the layer under the bark.

Save the Ash- Be Part of the Solution

Have you or your neighbors purchased or received firewood, landscape trees, logs, timber, or branches? All EAB finds in Illinois are believed to be directly related to importation of ash tree material from infested areas. If you answered yes, take the Symptom Checklist quiz on the right:



Symptom Checklist

After you have determined you have an ash tree, check for the following symptoms:

- Distinct D-shaped exit holes in the bark
- S-shaped tunnels on surface under the bark
- Sprout growth at the tree base
- Unusual activity by woodpeckers
- Die-back on the top third of the tree
- Vertical splits in the bark

If your tree has 2 or more symptoms, contact a local tree expert or your local county extension office, or report signs by sending digital photos to agr.eab@illinois.gov and be sure to include contact information. Need help identifying an ash tree? Go to www.emeraldashborer.info



For questions regarding the EAB trapping program, please contact IDA at 800-641-3934 or visit our EAB website:

www.IllinoisEAB.com

