City of Andover Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan/Program

PURPOSE
The City of Andover supports a proactive approach to identifying and planning for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestations to help spread the costs over a manageable time period and limit the detrimental effect on property value, quality of life and the environment.

APPLICABILITY
This management plan is applicable to all public and private properties within the City.

EAB COORDINATOR
The Natural Resources Technician (NRT) shall be responsible for implementing and overseeing this program.

HISTORY OF EAB
EAB (Agrilus planipennis) is an introduced pest that has been confirmed in fourteen (14) states, including Minnesota, and two (2) Canadian provinces. It was first discovered near Detroit, Michigan in July 2002. Since its initial finding, millions of ash trees have died and it's cost states, municipalities, nurseries, forest industries and property owners millions of dollars.

EAB attacks all species of ash trees (*Fraxinus* spp.) found in Minnesota, which include green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*) and white ash (*Fraxinus americana*). Minnesota is home to more than 900 million ash trees statewide. Mountain ash are not of the Fraxinus genus, so are unaffected by EAB.

By the end of 2010, EAB has been confirmed in three (3) Minnesota counties: Hennepin, Ramsey and Houston. It is uncertain when EAB will move beyond the known infestation sites and impact Andover.

While the adult beetles feed on ash leaves and do little damage, the larvae feed on the inner bark of trees, disrupting its ability to transport water and nutrients up to the canopy. As the number of larvae in a tree increases, less water and nutrients reach the canopy, resulting in dieback in the canopy. Initial attacks tend to be in the upper portions of the canopy. By the time visible symptoms are obvious, the population of EAB has grown and likely spread to other ash trees in the area.

RECOGNITION OF EAB
Signs/symptoms of EAB that can help detect an infestation include:

- Increased woodpecker activity/damage
- Bark splitting (vertical slits)
- Canopy dieback
- D-shaped exit holes created by adult insects as they emerge from the tree
- Epicormic branching/shoots near base of tree
- Serpentine (s-shaped) larval galleries that are packed with frass

EDUCATION
The City will continue to educate residents and elected officials concerning EAB using newsletter articles, segments on QCTV, the website and public and group presentations.

TRAINING
The NRT will stay informed about EAB outbreaks and research, including outcomes of the pilot programs with wasps. City staff will be trained by the NRT to aid in City planning, responsible tree removal and disposal and coordination of City response.

INVENTORY
A local ash tree inventory will allow the City to determine what is at stake, help determine which areas should rank as priority management areas and help with overall planning efforts.

Currently, the NRT has begun recording GPS locations of ash trees while in the field. Data collected includes number, size, condition and management recommendations.

Conducting a broader sample survey or complete inventory provides these benefits:

- Provide the percentage of public and private trees that consist of ash species
- Help plan for budget impacts for removal and replacement of trees
- Locate priority areas for tree management plans
- To forecast potential impacts of infected trees on private property
- Estimate volume of wood potentially requiring disposal
- Identify homeowner associations that may benefit from education and planning

DETECTION AND MONITORING
Staff will continue to inspect public and private properties, both on request and during routine inspections. Suspect trees will be carefully analyzed. Sampling mechanisms to be used will be consistent with Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) guidelines and will include but not be limited to visually looking at all parts of the tree, branch removal and bark shaving with a drawknife. Staff from the MDA will be contacted if EAB is suspected or confirmed in a tree. If staff detects an early infection which is limited to a few trees, the City may encourage tree removal to slow the rate of spread.

As in the past, the City will volunteer to allow MDA to set up purple traps in trees on public and private properties (with permission), to determine a presence of beetles in the City. The traps use a sticky substance to trap the beetles.

ORDINANCE REVISION
The City will revise its diseased tree ordinance to include EAB as a threat to the urban and community forest. The ordinance amendment will specify requirements for proper management of EAB infested trees.

ASH TREE REMOVAL

- Public trees (as authorized by the EAB Coordinator):
  - Any boulevard tree found to be positively infected with EAB will be removed
  - Any park tree in a landscape setting infected with EAB will be removed
  - Trees in wooded areas in a park that are positively infected with EAB and deemed a safety hazard will be removed. All other cases will be looked at on a case by case basis
  - Any stressed tree may be removed
  - Any tree may be removed, if determined appropriate; reasons may include under power line, safety hazard, near infection center, etc.
- Private trees:
  - EAB Coordinator will advise property owners of available options. Details on removal requirements will be specified in approved diseased tree ordinance.

TREE DISPOSAL AND UTILIZATION

Approved options for proper disposal of wood positively infected with EAB:

- Transporting the wood to an approved disposal site
- Chipping the wood to dimensions no greater than 1" x 1" x 1"
- Burning
- De-barking (removing all bark and at least 0.5" of outer wood)
- Treatment (including heat treating, kiln drying, fumigating, seasoning or another method approved by the MDA)

The NRT will continue to seek creative, cost effective ways to utilize ash trees. Examples may include finding a small scale logger who has a special market for ash or a property owner with a sawmill who makes unique products out of ash.

PLANTING

Ash will no longer be planted on public properties or recommended to be planted on private properties. Ash trees have been removed from the "City of Andover Tree Planting Recommendations" handout.

Staff will encourage planting other species. Native species found from common seed sources are highly recommended. The City will also plant a variety of species, as diverse plantings reduce impacts of insect or disease outbreaks.

CHEMICAL TREATMENTS

Currently, there are no cost-effective treatments for widespread city consideration.

The EAB Coordinator will provide consultation and information to help property owners devise treatment plans, as requested. Information will includeg the handout "Homeowner Guide to Insecticide Selection, Use and Environmental Protection." Staff will advocate for responsible application of chemicals that can be done by a non-licensed person. For chemicals that require professional application, only Certified Pesticide Applicators shall be recommended.

BUDGET
The City Forestry Fund will include a new category called "EAB Fund" and will fund this plan beginning in 2012 with a $5,000 allotment. Each year, an additional $5,000 may be added.

The NRT will continue to seek grant opportunities to fund this plan.

PARTNERSHIPS/CURRENT ACTIVITIES
The City will continue to work with the MDA, DNR, Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee (MnSTAC) and neighboring communities.

The NRT is a board member of MnSTAC and as current chairman of the Forest Health Committee, is working on hosting a discussion on EAB for communities around the state.

The City held a meeting with neighboring communities in August 2009, and plans to hold more meetings in the future. Included local units of government include the Cities of Blaine, Coon Rapids, Ham Lake, Ramsey and Anoka County Parks. Regular meetings will allow for idea and resource sharing and a regional EAB program that is consistent and cost effective.

SUMMARY
EAB poses a serious threat to Andover's urban and community forest. The City will implement this EAB Management Plan/Program to the extent feasible. This management plan is dynamic and subject to revision(s) as new information about EAB becomes available and/or as new treatment options are identified. Furthermore, this plan is also subject to revision should state and/or federal policies necessitate plan updates.

2011 TASKS/GOALS
- Present plan to and train City staff about EAB
- Develop and provide information packet to public works staff
- Send information on EAB to Andover Licensed Tree Care Companies
- Meet with neighboring communities (Ramsey, Ham Lake, Blaine, Coon Rapids and Anoka County Parks)
- Continue inventory
- Remove stressed ash trees in boulevards and parks
- Prepare education materials on EAB for public events, newsletter & website
- Have booth and/or presentation at Home Show
- Establish Budget to be included in the City 2012 Annual Budget

CONTACTS
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