

The Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan For the City of Athens

Revised September 2014

Purpose

By acting on this management plan, the City hopes to mitigate the disruption to its urban forest caused by the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation. Planning and acting now will permit the City to address public and private needs efficiently and effectively.

The City will try to distribute the costs inherent in certain and massive tree death over a manageable time period, and to reduce the social and economic impact that such an extensive loss will have on the quality of life in Athens.

Applicability

This Plan applies throughout the City on all public properties where ash trees are currently growing. Through this plan, private property owners will be advised as to what their choices are regarding EAD infested trees.

Administration

The City Shade Tree Commission will advise the Service Safety Director, who will be responsible for the implementation of this Plan.

Ash Removal

The City has conducted an inventory of all ash trees growing on its rights-of-way, in parks, and on other municipal properties. Dead and dying tree removal will be prioritized with hazardous trees being removed first followed by those that are no longer assets to the community (dead, dying, diseased, or miss-sited). Utility contractors will be encouraged to remove all ash within their easements as part of their normal line clearance activities.

Monitoring

Now that an EAB infestation has been discovered, a survey of the infected area will be made. All ash wood from pruning or removals shall be inspected for EAB by looking for D-shaped exit holes and removing the bark to find larval galleries.

Wood Utilization and Disposal

The City will develop a plan to use the wood generated during the removal program. The plan must comply with the Ohio Department of Agriculture's regulations for handling regulated materials. Wood that cannot be used for lumber, turning, firewood, or mulch, will be disposed of

according to ODA specifications. Refer to the ODA website¹ for a list of companies with ODA compliance agreements.

Communications

The mayor, city council, tree commission and department heads will receive periodic briefings through normal channels. All media relations will follow normal municipal protocol.

Education

A training session for in-house staff, contractors, tree commissioners, and residents will be held to discuss the impending infestation and to provide ash and EAB identification tips.

Canopy Replacement and Care

As the budget permits, all removed public ash trees will be replaced with a variety of non-host species appropriate for the available planting sites. Trees will be planted in accordance with the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association/Ohio Division of Forestry Tree Planting Specifications which can be found at the ODNR website². Be in 1 ½” to 2” caliper range, and obtained from ONLA member firms. Plantings will be budget based and prioritized by canopy cover goals as identified by the City Shade Trees Commission. Those areas needing the most trees to reach their goal will be planted first, such as Suburban Residential (50 percent cover), Urban Residential (25 percent cover), and Central Business (15 percent). All new plantings will conform to the “10-20-30” tree species diversity rule.

Private Ash Trees

The City will create and maintain an EAB Informational Page on the City’s website. Depending on resources, the City may organize a purchase program where private residents may purchase trees in spring and fall planting seasons. The City would provide information on site selection, planting, and maintenance to each participant in the program.

Contact List

ODNR Regional Forester in Athens
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¹ ODA website <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/eab/eabcompliance.aspx> accessed September 10, 2014

² ODNR website <http://forestry.ohiodnr.gov/urban/education/post/sample-tree-planting-specifications> accessed September 10, 2014