

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2007-51
October 25, 2007

SUBJECT: Interception of Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) in West Virginia

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On October 17, 2007, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the detection of one emerald ash borer (EAB) larva from a detection tree set at the Ace Adventure Center in Oak Hill, Fayette County, West Virginia. This is the first confirmed EAB detection in this state. After confirming this detection, the affected detector tree was removed and its bark was stripped, revealing seven additional EAB larvae upon inspection.

The affected facility is an outdoor recreational site supporting camping, mountain biking, and white water rafting. This site is located approximately 180 miles south of the nearest EAB detection in the area of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The movement of EAB-infested firewood is an important pathway for moving the beetle and is believed to be how the insect found its way to Fayette County.

APHIS and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture personnel returned to the site on October 19, to determine the prevalence of ash trees in the immediate area and scout for signs of additional EAB-infested trees. Ash trees are a scarce component of West Virginia's forests; no more than 5 percent of the state's counties have any significant ash tree populations. This makes it difficult to locate ash trees to use as EAB detection trees. Delimitation surveys may be supplemented with the use of new trapping technology developed by APHIS methods and development staff.

EAB is present in other areas of the United States, including Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, Michigan, and Prince George's County, Maryland. EAB is an invasive wood boring beetle that is native to China and eastern Asia. EAB probably arrived in North America hidden in wood packing materials commonly used to ship consumer and other goods. It was first detected in the United States in southeastern Michigan. Since then, EAB has been responsible for the death and decline of more than 25 million ash trees in the United States. APHIS is working with State cooperators and foresters to raise public awareness about the high risk of spreading EAB associated with the interstate movement of firewood from quarantined areas.

For additional details on the Federal response to the detection of EAB in West Virginia and other affected States, you may contact Deborah McPartlan, Staff Officer, at (301) 734-5356.

/s/ John H. Payne for

Richard L. Dunkle
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine