



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Tom Womack  
615-837-5118 or 615-419-8636  
[Tom.Womack@TN.gov](mailto:Tom.Womack@TN.gov)

Tim Phelps, Forestry  
615-837-5543 or 615-428-5913  
[Tim.R.Phelps@TN.gov](mailto:Tim.R.Phelps@TN.gov)

## **EMERALD ASH BORER DISCOVERED IN EAST TENNESSEE**

*- Plans underway to survey and restrict movement of ash material in Knox, Loudon counties -*

**Nashville, Tenn.** – The Tennessee Department of Agriculture today announced the discovery of emerald ash borer (EAB), the first detection of the destructive tree pest in the state. The discovery was made last week at a truck stop in Knox County near the Loudon County line.

“We knew EAB could potentially reach Tennessee, and we’re prepared to help slow the spread of the infestation and protect our forest resources.” said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens. “We will be working closely with federal officials and other stakeholders to determine the extent of the infestation and to take steps to limit its spread.”

After receiving a report of a suspected find, state and federal officials collected specimens from infested logs for submission to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for positive identification. USDA confirmed the find late last week.

EAB attacks only ash trees. It is believed to have been introduced into the Detroit, Mich. area 15 to 20 years ago on wood packing material from Asia. Since then, the destructive insect has been found also in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

In response to the find, TDA plans to issue a quarantine in Knox and Loudon counties prohibiting the movement of firewood, ash nursery stock, ash timber and other material that can spread EAB. TDA plant inspectors and foresters will conduct a thorough survey of trees in the areas to assess the extent of the infestation. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is working closely with TDA in response and will likely issue a federal quarantine in the coming days in support of national efforts to control the spread of EAB.

**- MORE -**

ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER  
BOX 40627, NASHVILLE, TN 37204  
[Tennessee.gov/agriculture](http://Tennessee.gov/agriculture)

Typically, the Emerald Ash Borer beetles can kill an ash tree within three years of the initial infestation. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from April until September, depending on the climate of the area. In Tennessee, most EAB adults would fly in May and June. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees. When they emerge as adults, they leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry estimates that 10 million urban ash trees in Tennessee are potentially at risk from EAB. The risk represents an estimated value loss of \$2 billion. There are an estimated 261 million ash trees on Tennessee public and private timberland potentially valued as high as \$9 billion.

TDA officials urge area residents and visitors to help prevent the spread of EAB:

- **Don't transport firewood, even within Tennessee.** Don't bring firewood along for camping trips. Buy the wood you need from a local source. Don't bring wood home with you.
- **Don't buy or move firewood from outside the state.** If someone comes to your door selling firewood, ask them about the source, and don't buy wood from outside the state.
- **Watch for signs of infestation in your ash trees.** If you suspect your ash tree could be infested with EAB, visit [www.TN.gov/agriculture/eab](http://www.TN.gov/agriculture/eab) for an online symptoms checklist and report form or call TDA's Regulatory Services Division at 1-800-628-2631.

For more information about other programs and services of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture visit [www.tn.gov/agriculture](http://www.tn.gov/agriculture) .

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