

Weare Latest New Hampshire Town to Discover Emerald Ash Borer

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Quarantine expands and public information meeting is scheduled for November 13 in Goffstown



Weare is the latest New Hampshire town to discover the Emerald ash borer (EAB).

Though it only infests trees in the Oleaceae (olive) family and is highly specific to ash trees, it's considered the most destructive forest pest in North America. It kills infested ash trees within three to five years unless preventative steps are taken.

EAB was first detected in New Hampshire in the spring of 2013 when an infested tree was found in Concord. Since that initial detection, it's been found in Bow, Canterbury, Loudon, Hopkinton, Salem, and now in Weare. Connecticut and Massachusetts are two other New England states with infestations.

A public informational meeting about EAB and the quarantine takes place November 13 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Hillsborough County Complex, 329 Mast Road, Goffstown.

At the meeting, representatives from the N.H. Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food and the N.H. Department of Resources and Economic Development Division of Forests and Lands will describe the emerald ash borer's threat and the purpose and provisions of the quarantine.

Concerned citizens, homeowners who have ash trees on their properties, community leaders, members of the forestry and "green" industries, and those concerned about the health of New Hampshire's trees and forests are encouraged to attend.

EAB is spread by people moving firewood, nursery stock, and wood products. New finds of EAB in a county results in a county-wide quarantine to restrict the insects' movement while facilitating continued trade in ash products. The detection of EAB in Weare adds all of Hillsborough County to the already-existing quarantines in Merrimack and Rockingham counties. The new boundaries of the quarantine will go into effect on October 30.

Piera Siegert, state entomologist with the Dept. of Agriculture, Markets and Food says, "The quarantine supports the management efforts of landowners and state officials. This pest is moved by people and the best chance we have to impact ash mortality is to have the public cooperate by following the quarantine, looking for EAB, and reporting suspect trees to www.nhbugs.org."

Siegert advises communities and residents to evaluate their trees and woodlots, looking for ash, and research their options for chemical treatment or removal. "If you are in or near a town with a known EAB population, it is time to initiate chemical treatments of trees in order to get the biggest impact."

According to Molly Heuss, forest health specialist with the N.H. Division of Forests and Lands, "Thousands of ash trees in New Hampshire are already dying because of EAB and over time more infestations will appear throughout the state. Slowing the spread of the insect gives others more time to learn about EAB and prepare for it. Each of us needs to make sure we don't inadvertently move the insect. The quarantine will help us achieve this goal."