

OF POTENTIAL INTEREST

New Invasive Pest Has Pennsylvania Towns on Alert

<http://online.wsj.com/articles/new-invasive-pest-has-pennsylvania-towns-on-alert-1416335733?tesla=y&mg=reno64-wsj&url=http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10066754989568544183504580284890970976322.html>

A lanternfly was discovered in September by a Pennsylvania state game commission official near his home outside Philadelphia. PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

By KRIS MAHER Wall St. Journal, Nov. 18, 2014 8:20 p.m. ET
3 COMMENTS

An invasive insect from Asia that can munch its way through vineyards and hardwood forests, inflicting significant economic damage, has appeared in the U.S. for what is thought to be the first time. The spotted lanternfly—a moth-like insect with one pair of tan wings with black inky spots and another pair of red, white and black wings—was discovered in September by a Pennsylvania game-commission official who noticed it near his home in Berks County, west of Philadelphia.



Spotted Lanternfly Poses Threat to Grape, Hardwood Industries; ‘a Good Deal of Concern’

Experts believe it is the first time the lanternfly, which feeds on leaves and young stems, has been identified in North America. Pennsylvania has a sizable grape industry and is the leading producer of hardwoods in the U.S., state officials say.

“It’s ironic how pretty the bug is and how devastating it can be,” said Samantha Krepps, a spokeswoman for the state agriculture agency. “Our entomologists are out there scraping and collecting egg masses. We have boots on the ground.”

Officials say they have found thousands of specimens, including egg masses, in a 40-square-kilometer area in eastern Pennsylvania. They are still determining the infestation’s extent and whether they will be able to fully eradicate the insect.

“There is a good deal of concern. The insect is out in the environment and in a large wooded area,” said Deborah McPartlan, national policy manager with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. “It survives. It’s quite a hardy insect.”

The USDA alerted customs and border officials earlier this month to be on the lookout for commodities infested with the insect from China, India, Japan and Vietnam—countries where the species is normally found and kept in check by natural predators or pathogens.

On Tuesday, Sen. Bob Casey of Pennsylvania called on the USDA to provide emergency funding to help combat the insect. “We’ve seen before the significant economic impact that invasive species can have,”

Mr. Casey said. "Taking action will protect two of the commonwealth's strongest industries—fruit and forestry."

The lanternfly is considered a significant pest in Korea, where it has expanded its range over the past five to seven years and become a threat to the country's grape industry. It has attacked 25 plant species in Korea that also grow in Pennsylvania, according to state officials.

Despite its wings, the insect is a lazy flier—it hops from location to location—and the greatest risk of its spread comes from people transporting materials containing egg masses. The insect feeds on oak, walnut, pine and poplar trees as well as fruit trees but tends to lay eggs on smooth flat surfaces, from the bark of trees to cars, light poles or even brick or stone houses.

This month, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture banned the transport from seven municipalities of items that could harbor the pest. The ban includes firewood, lawn mowers, outdoor chairs, trucks and RVs. Individuals and businesses face penalties up to a fine of \$20,000 and prison time for moving items without certification.

Greg Hoover, an ornamental entomologist at Pennsylvania State University who has collected specimens at the site of the infestation, said he was surprised by the insect's leap. "The things have a tremendous ability to jump," he said. "Once they hop, then they can set their wings, but we're measuring it in feet, not in tremendous distances," he said.

The presence of old egg masses indicates the insect has been in the area for at least two years and survived last winter's unusual cold in the Northeast, Mr. Hoover said. The waxy, gray masses contain 30 to 50 eggs.

The lanternfly joins dozens of other invasive species being tracked by federal and state officials. Some are identified on individual shipping containers and don't prove dangerous. Others have spread quickly across the country and wreaked widespread economic damage.

The emerald ash borer beetle, native to Asia, was first detected in southeastern Michigan in 2002. Since then, it has spread to 24 states and killed millions of ash trees in North America, according to the USDA. The agency estimates that in urban environments alone the insect could potentially cause the death of 30 million to 90 million trees with a loss of \$20 billion to \$60 billion.

The Emerald Ash Borer is 'Winning' Along East Coast

<http://www.natureworldnews.com/articles/10428/20141118/emerald-ash-borer-winning-along-east-coast.htm>

emerald ash borer. Digsby

By Brian Stallard Nov 18, 2014 11:37 AM EST

Even as winter closes in, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) continues to be a threatening nuisance to states across the East Coast, destroying ash trees and jacking up the price of firewood just before we need it. Now it has spread to new states and Canada, sparking renewed efforts to keep it contained. (Photo : David Cappaert/USDA)

Even as winter closes in, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) continues to be a threatening nuisance to states across the East Coast, destroying ash trees and jacking up the price of firewood just before we need it. Now it has spread to new states and Canada, sparking renewed efforts to keep it contained.

As of late last week, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed the concentrated presence of EAB in the Municipality of Notre-Dame-de-Laus, Quebec. Disturbingly, this discovery is well outside regulated boundaries, marking Canada's first case of the invasive insects breaking through pre-established quarantines.

And while the EAB is relatively new to North America, first showing up in 2002, the United States and the Canadian regions of Ontario and Quebec have already been deeply affected by the harmful eastern Asian beetle.

A whopping 23 states, largely in the eastern US along the East Coast, are currently being affected by the tiny green beetle. And while the adult EAB itself is not a huge problem, its larvae feed just below an ash tree's bark, interfering with the plant's water and nutrient uptake and causing it to die.

Because the EAB has little-to-no natural predators in North America, it's free to reproduce en masse, posing a serious threat to the ash tree industry.

The spread of this pest is also proving particularly difficult to contain. At the start of this month, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced that the borer was spreading further into the state, invading two new counties.

Then just last week, Massachusetts's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) announced that the EAB was still spreading within its borders, and promptly announced a state-wide quarantine. Much like a quarantine that New York launched several weeks ago, this restriction limits the movement of certain wood products (primarily firewood) outside of regulated areas.

"The Emerald Ash Borer poses a very serious threat to ash trees across the Commonwealth," said DCR Commissioner Jack Murray. "We believe a state-wide quarantine provides the best chance for slowing the spread of Emerald Ash Borer."



However, for states that have already seen what the EAB can do, a firewood quarantine just doesn't seem enough.

In Connecticut, local news stations are reporting that "it looks like the Emerald Ash Borer has won." That's because starting Friday, Dec. 5, restrictions on moving firewood within the state are being rescinded for anyone with the right paperwork, where quarantine borders are being expanded to all of the state's eight counties.

"The reason why we are expanding the quarantine is simply because we've found that eradication of this insect is not possible," Deputy State Entomologist Victoria Smith told WNPR News.

This expansion is adding Connecticut to a larger quarantine zone that extends all the way to Iowa and Missouri. However, interstate firewood transport remains restricted. (Scroll to read on...)

And while this may be some pretty bad news for ash tree owners and farmers, lightening restrictions could be a silver lining for homeowners this winter.

That's because quarantine conditions have been limiting the availability of purchasable firewood. In New York, for instance, retailers are limited to moving firewood up to only 50 miles from its source. That's a problem for some retailers, who normally travel far longer distances to pick up treated logs from areas like the Adirondacks or even just along the Pennsylvanian boarder.

"Some of the sources that may have been farther away have dried up because they just can't transport it," said Joyce Meiler, office manager for Craft Tree and Land Clearing, told New York's Democrat & Chronicle.

Looking for quality logs then becomes a very expensive hassle, in which demand heavily outweighs supply. A face cord alone - one third of a full stack of wood - can cost about \$95 this holiday season. That's nearly \$10 more than last year.

Still, it might be a small price to pay to at least slow the spread of a harmful new pest.

ILLINOIS

Des Plaines Tree Fee Remains For Now

http://www.journal-topics.com/news/article_c874bb7a-6f87-11e4-8ba7-2b8c97266479.html

By TIM O'CONNOR Journal & Topics (IL), Tuesday, November 18, 2014 9:30 pm

Since 2004, 2,207 Des Plaines residents have paid \$50 to share in the cost of replacing dead trees in their parkways.

The city council may eventually do away with that fee in the future to spur even more replacements. But there won't be an increase in the 2015 budget to offset the cost.

Aldermen agreed during their Oct. 29 budget discussion to stick with the \$300,000 for 1,000 tree plantings already planned for 2015. An additional \$150,000 to fund another 500 tree replacements was rejected.

The \$50 cost sharing by residents was enacted in 1988. The program contributed to the average \$300 cost to replace a parkway tree once it died or became a hazard. But the onset of Emerald Ash Borer infestation in the area marked thousands of trees for an eventual death. In 2007 the city had to replace only 85 trees. A year later, they replaced 437.

But many more trees were dying and were not being replaced due to the mandatory cost share. Only 30% of residents have participated in the program, leaving many once densely packed neighborhood streets now empty looking. The council has considered eliminating the fee over the past year to allow for more plantings.

"We are being deforested every year," Ald. Denise Rodd (3rd) said at the budget meeting.

Ald. Mark Walsten (6th) agreed the fee should be dropped.

"We don't want to live in a barren dark city," he said. "I don't, anyway."

Not all on the council agreed. Ald. Mike Charewicz (8th) said having residents contribute ensured the city did not plant any excess trees. Likewise, Ald. Dick Sayad (4th) said many of his constituents simply don't want a new tree and the hassle they bring.

Mayor Matt Bogusz suggested a compromise: do away with the fee but allow homeowners to opt out of a replacement tree.

"There is absolutely a way for us to green our neighborhoods and give residents an opportunity to avoid their sewers," Bogusz said, touching on one of the new tree complaints.

The \$300,000 already in the budget may allow for that wiggle room. Finance Director Dorothy Wisniewski said public works is expected to spend only \$200,000 of that funding next year. That could leave money to end the fee or even reimburse those residents who have participated in cost sharing in recent years.

The council decided to keep the funding as is and tackle the fee at a future public works committee meeting.

MINNESOTA

Minnesota's Gypsy Moth Population Drops

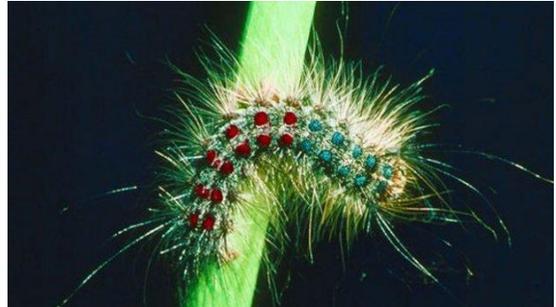
<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2014/11/19/minnesotas-gypsy-moth-population-drops/>

(credit: Jupiter Images)

Associated Press, November 19, 2014 6:06 AM

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — At least something good came out of the bitter cold of last winter — Minnesota's gypsy moth population is down.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture says its traps captured around 500 gypsy moths around the state this year. That's a major drop from last year's trap count of over 71,000 of the destructive forest pests.



Brian Aukema of the forest insect laboratory at the University of Minnesota says the decrease in moths is good news, but the pests will bounce back quickly. He says a single surviving egg mass will produce more than 500 hungry caterpillars.

Gypsy moth caterpillars, which are not native to North America, eat the leaves of many trees and shrubs. Severe, repeated infestations can kill trees, especially when they're already stressed by drought or other factors.

State entomologist: Better to focus on infected ash trees

http://www.postbulletin.com/news/local/state-entomologist-better-to-focus-on-infected-ash-trees/article_68509f7a-d93a-508a-a935-1b789b5120ce.html

Associated Press. This file photo shows tracks from emerald ash borers left in a black ash tree.

Rachel Leingang Post-Bulletin (MN), Tuesday, November 18, 2014 7:28 am

Emerald ash borer infestation takes years to show up in affected trees, but residents can use a couple of tactics to control the pest, a state expert told the Rochester City Council on Monday.

The pest was found in Olmsted County in August, and thousands of ash trees in the county are expected to be affected. The emerald ash borer has spread to Ramsey, Hennepin, Winona and Houston counties as well, and all five counties are under a quarantine designed to contain movement of the tree-killing beetle.

In Olmsted County, the affected trees are near the interchange of Interstate 90 and U.S. Highway 63 north of Stewartville, about 45 miles from a similarly infected area in Winona County.

One of the options for fighting the insects is to remove affected trees and destroy them, said Mark Abrahamson, an entomologist with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

"That's actually a pretty viable management tactic," Abrahamson said.

Borer larvae cause the biggest problem as they tunnel into a tree's bark and beyond, he said. Emerald ash borer can be tough to manage because symptoms aren't usually visible until the pest has been inside the tree for years, Abrahamson said. It takes one to two years to turn the problem around in an infected tree. "This is a process that took years to unfold," he said.

Another option for treating ash trees is injecting them with an insecticide, which can range in cost from tens to hundreds of dollars per tree, he said. Those insecticides will affect all insects inside the tree, not just the emerald ash borer.

"We could consider them pests as well for feeding on the tree," Abrahamson said.

Additionally, if any other plants are near the tree's root system, and the insecticide is soaked up via the tree's roots, those plants could be affected, which could affect bees who visit those plants, he said.

"Anytime you use an insecticide, there's going to be considerations for other impacts," he said.

It is within a city's interest to replace ash trees that aren't infected yet with other trees as a forestry management tactic, but it won't help in stopping the emerald ash borer, Abrahamson said, adding that concentrating on infected trees is the best offensive action. "If you're removing and destroying infected trees, you're having a direct impact on the emerald ash borer population," he said.

So far, the City of Rochester has removed and replaced about 2,000 ash trees since 2009, but only those that were infected or that interfered with infrastructure, said City Forester Jeff Haberman.

"We have not removed any good ash trees to date," Haberman said. People with ash trees on their properties can watch for early signs of infestation, such as bark starting to split open vertically, more woodpecker activity and a characteristic S-shaped tunnel made by the larvae, Abrahamson said. To find that tunnel, people will need to pull back the tree's bark, he said. "Just cutting away the bark isn't going to hurt the tree any more" than the emerald ash borer is, Abrahamson said.



WISCONSIN

State officials say firewood transport restrictions still in place despite winter temperatures

<http://wtaq.com/news/articles/2014/nov/17/state-officials-say-firewood-transport-restrictions-still-in-place-despite-winter-temperatures/>

Emerald Ash Borer (from U.S. Department of Agriculture via usda.gov) Emerald Ash Borer (from U.S. Department of Agriculture via usda.gov)

by Raymond Neupert WSAU (WI), Monday, November 17, 2014 3:14 a.m. CST

MADISON, Wis. (WSAU) -- As you get ready for deer camp, remember not to transport your firewood from other parts of the state.

State officials say that could spread emerald ash borer and gypsy moths, two of the most damaging pests for Wisconsin forests.

Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection Spokesperson Donna Gilson says even though it's winter, you're still able to spread them. "Those insect pests can remain alive in the wood through the winter. They're under the bark, they're protected, especially if it gets left somewhere and gets snow over it. Makes a nice blanket for the pests." That means any leftover wood or heat could spread the pests.



Gilson says that despite the bitter cold last year, EAB survived, according to research from the University of Minnesota. Gilson says research done in Minnesota showed that last year's winter did little to stem the beetle in that state. "You have to remember there are portions of Minnesota that are farther north than Wisconsin, farther inland, and, hard to believe, had an even more severe winter than we had last year. It just wasn't enough in Wisconsin last year to put a dent in that population." The original native range of the beetle already stretches up into Siberia, which makes them extremely hardy creatures. The state's rule is to only burn firewood harvested from within 10 miles of your campsite. Gilson says the exception to that is buying certified firewood. "Buy firewood that has the label on it that says it's certified by DATCP, that's our agency, that it's pest free. And that's the one exception, you can haul that anywhere in the state so long as it's been certified as being heat treated or treated in some way that it doesn't have pests on it." She adds that you don't ever want to be the one responsible for spreading the beetle.

For more information, log on to the state website at <http://emeraldashborer.wi.gov>.