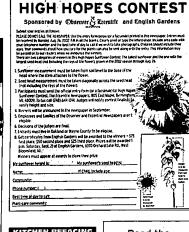
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Exotic pest threat to ash tree identified locally

BY NICOLE STAFFORD STAFF WRITER

An exotic pest may be the culprit behind a rash of local ash tree deaths.

Federal and local officials say they have identified infestation by the Emeral Ash Borer, a beetle from Asia, in five southeast Michigan counties, including Ondland and Wayne.

In recent years, there has been a significant loss of ash trees in southeast Michigan. Initially, the deaths were attributed to a combination of disease, drought and soil conditions.

Though those factors may be in play, infestation by the Emerald Ash Borer is a likely

Emerald Ash Borer is a likely additional reason.

To prevent the spread of the invasive species; the Michigan Department of Agriculture has quarantined ash trees and their timber products, whether infested regions.

"The reason is you may not be able to tell whether it's infested," said Tim Flint,

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Tim Flint Michigan Department of Agriculture

deputy director of the Pesticide and Plant Fest Management Division of the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Macomb, Livingston and Washtenaw counties join Oakland and Wayne in the list of figured beginns.

Visional and Wayne in the list of affected regions. Under the quarantine, ash trees and their branches, as well as ash logs and firewood, cannot be moved from an affected area without certification by the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Violation of the quarantine is a misdemeanor, said Flint. And since it's difficult to identify the tree type when looking at firewood, residents of affect-decounties are advised to discontinue transporting all logs and timber.

"Get your firewood locally," Flint advised local campers planning future trips.

Finit advised local campers planning future trips. Likewise, landscapers and commercial suppliers will be unable to transport ash trees from affected to unaffected

Emerald Ash Borer adults are dark metallic green and about a half-inch in length and 1/16-inch in width. Their lar-

vae are creamy white and found under tree bark. Typically, the beetles go undetected until an affected tree shows symptoms of infes

tree shows symptoms of infestation.

In terms of what homeowners can do with infected ash
trees, 'there are not a lot of
options,' said Flint.

Most require the services of
a commercial pest control
company, 'However, no treatment has been proven effective
thus far, he said.

While officials need to gather
additional information about
the pest, they believe it presents
to danger to human beings,

The only known hazards are
familiar with related species,
we don't expect additional
problems,' Flint said. 'It's early
on in the process and all of us
expect to know more and learn
more.



For more information about pest for more information about pess treatment opilions, visit www.michi-gan.qov/mda on the Internet (use key phrase "ash borer" to define search). Report possible intestation siled in currently unaffected countles by call-ing the Michigan Department of Agriculture's foll-free Emerald Ash Borer hotline at (866) 325-0023.



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