

Is Emerald Ash Borer Hiding in Your Firewood?

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Firewood has long been a heating source for many homes and memorable camping trips with family and friends. Unfortunately, today's firewood can harbor insects and pathogens, both native and non-native. The non-native, invasive exotics — especially — can be harmful to the environment, often resulting in the death of the host tree or shrub. Transporting infested or infected firewood can result in a dramatically more rapid spread of these harmful pests.



Adult EAB

The natural spread of insects and diseases is much like a forest fire. The main fire line represents the most intense flame, but in front of the line there are numerous small fires or "hot spots," caused by sparks that are blown or carried to new areas. In a similar manner, insects and diseases naturally spread a minimal distance in search of mates and food and to establish new colonies. However, when firewood infested with an insect or disease is moved to a further location, a "hot spot" is started, advancing the spread of the pest and its damage to the environment. Using local sources of firewood helps prevent these hot spots and protects the environment.



Non-native or invasive pests associated with wood tend to have severe ecological and environmental impacts because they often kill their host tree. Native trees do not have a built-in defense mechanism to fight off these types of invaders, such as emerald ash borer (EAB)¹. EAB is an invasive insect that has already killed millions of ash trees in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ontario, Canada. It was first identified near Detroit, Michigan, in June of 2002, and was probably introduced via infested wood shipping materials (pallets, crates and other solid-wood packaging). Wood-borers generally attack only weak trees, but EAB is especially devastating because it kills healthy as well as stressed trees, and will threaten the existence of ash trees throughout North America as it continues to spread. In its native range in northeast Asia, where ash trees have adapted to the pest over time, EAB is not a pest, as they typically attack only stressed trees.

EAB disperses quite slowly on its own, but movement of EAB by humans has greatly accelerated its rate of spread. Many isolated hot-spot infestations in Ohio and surrounding states resulted from transportation of EAB-infested ash or ash products such as nursery stock, firewood, logs, green lumber, and pallets.

¹ Other invasive insect pests and diseases of trees include chestnut blight, Dutch elm disease, beech bark disease, Asian longhorned beetle, gypsy moth, syrex wood wasp, pine shoot beetle, hemlock woolly adelgid, viburnum leaf beetle, and sudden oak death.

Regulations Concerning the Movement of Ash Trees and Wood Materials

Quarantines of potentially infected materials are a tool commonly used by regulatory agencies to reduce or eliminate the rapid spread of insects or diseases. As of January 2008, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) has quarantined the states of Michigan (Lower Peninsula), Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and portions of Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia to slow the further spread of EAB. In addition to the APHIS quarantine, Ohio and other states have quarantined parts of their states to help slow the insect's spread. This means it is against the law to move ash trees, parts of an ash tree, and all hardwood firewood out of quarantined areas without a state-approved compliance agreement. In Ohio, violators who transport non-coniferous firewood and ash tree materials out of a quarantined area into a non-quarantined area face fines up to \$4,000. Other states have similar fines in place. USDA-APHIS fines can be as high as \$250,000 if quarantined materials are moved across a quarantine boundary (e.g., state border).

To find out more about Ohio's regulations, go to the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Web site, www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/regulations. Additionally, information on USDA regulations can be found at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/index.shtml. Current infestation and quarantine maps (county, state and multi-state) can be viewed or downloaded at <http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/plnt-eab-maps.stm>.

Buy Local, Burn Local

To help reduce the spread of EAB, as well as other firewood pests:

- Inspect firewood and learn to identify signs and symptoms of pest-infested wood.
- Know and abide by state and federal quarantines established to protect Ohio's landscapes and hardwood forests.
- Immediately dispose of infested wood by safely burning it outdoors at its current location.
- Stop the artificial spread of EAB and other pests by not transporting firewood from one location to another (e.g., from home to campground or from campground to home). Follow the campaign slogan, "Buy local and burn local."
- Help educate others on the issues and reasons to not move firewood.

For more information about EAB, go to one of the following Web sites:

<http://www.ashalert.osu.edu>

<http://www.emeraldashborer.info>

<http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/>

<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/tabid/5066/Default.aspx>



Galleries filled with frass



D-shaped exit holes

