

Emerald Ash Borer Public Meeting

April 11, 2024

Canton, South Dakota

Emerald ash borer is an exotic borer responsible for the loss of hundreds of millions of ash trees across North America. It kills all our native ash trees. Emerald ash borer was first discovered in Detroit, Michigan in 2002 and confirmed in Sioux Falls in 2018. The insect is now found in Lincoln, Minnehaha, and Union counties.

More information on this insect and its threat to our ash tree can be found on the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources website *Emerald Ash Borer in South Dakota* at:

<https://emeraldashborerinsouthdakota.sd.gov/>

Information on the life cycle of the insect can be found in South Dakota Cooperative Extension publication *Emerald Ash Borer Life Cycle in South Dakota* at:

<https://extension.sdstate.edu/sites/default/files/2023-05/P-00266.pdf>

Emerald ash borer status in Canton

Emerald ash borer was confirmed in Canton in 2020. The insect has now spread throughout the community and the surrounding countryside. Every ash in Canton should be assumed to be infested by this insect.

Can an infested tree still be treated and saved?

If the tree is exhibiting less than 20% canopy decline and there is little blanding – where woodpeckers have removed bark in their search for EAB larvae – the tree can still be successfully treated. The only effective treatments are those done by a commercial applicator. More information on treatment options can be obtained through the South Dakota Cooperative Extension publication *Emerald Ash Borer Insecticide Treatment Options* at:

<https://extension.sdstate.edu/sites/default/files/2020-04/P-00163.pdf>

Remember treatments are not a one-time fix but must be repeated for at least ten years on an annual or biannual basis depending on the insecticide and delivery system. The treatments will need to be continued beyond then but at a less frequent interval. If treatments are stopped, the borer will infest the tree.

Removing infested trees

If the tree has more than 20% canopy decline, it should be removed. Emerald ash borer causes structural weaknesses in the host tree. These trees may fail at the base or have large, dead limbs snap and fall. Homeowners in other states have suffered fatal injuries felling ash trees that were killed by the borer.

The best means of removing an infested ash or one that died is contracting with a professional tree company. These companies will have arborists with the training and equipment to safely remove these trees. A critical question to ask is their insurance coverage. Do they have liability insurance to cover damage done to your home or property? Do they have workers' compensation insurance to protect you from claims if one of their employees is injured on your property? Another question is about their credentials to do these removals. Are they certified by the International Society of Arboriculture? What are their years of experience doing tree removals?

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