

City of Sterling Ash Trees & Emerald Ash Borer Management Information

Public Trees

Current Total Public Tree Population -- unknown

Current Public Ash Population – about 213 (including some Park District parks)

Current Sterling Park District Ash Population – about 300

Current Sterling School District Ash Population – 12

Circumference Breakdown of City Public Ashes:

- Unknown – 39
- 1-5" – 0
- 6-19" – 3
- 20-34" – 16
- 35- 49" – 33
- 50-75" – 49
- 76-99" – 29
- Over 100" – 44

Diameter Breakdown of City Public Ashes:

- Unknown – 39
- 1-3" – 0
- 3-6" – 3
- 6-12" – 20
- 12-18" – 42
- 18-24" – 35
- 24-204" – 74

If EAB is found in Sterling:

***estimates using 200 trees

Current Cost to Remove All Public Ash Trees: \$160,000

*Cost is based on current prices (average \$800) charged by our tree removal contractor and includes stump removal. The above cost does not include restoration of the parkway.

Estimated Cost to Replace All Public Ash Trees: \$80,000

*Cost is based on current average tree cost of \$400 per tree.

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Estimated Cost to Treat All Public Ash Trees (40 year time period): \$212,000

*Cost is based on an average of \$53 per tree for a 2-year treatment. Ash trees must be treated for the rest of their life or until it is proven that EAB is not in the area (estimated time frame of 40 years of treatments). Treatments are staggered longer as time passes.

	Remove All	Replace All	Total Remove/Replace	Treat All (25 years)	Treat All (40 years)
City Estimates	160,000	80,000	240,000	132,500	212,000
EAB Cost Calculator	134,352	197,585	331,937	408,628	

Private Trees

An infestation of EAB will also impact the trees on private property since all ash trees within a given radius may require removal or become infested. The amount of private ash trees can be estimated to be equal or as much as 3x as many as the amount of public ash trees. The Sterling Park District also has a substantial ash population and the loss of these trees will have a devastating impact on the visual appeal of the parks. The cost of removal will be higher on private property ash trees because of the greater inaccessibility to these areas.

Current codes regarding hazardous dead trees on private property still stands. Please refer to the City website for the Tree Ordinance. To take stringent action on private ash trees, some cities have created Nuisance Ordinances. This is an action the City of Sterling does not feel is necessary.

Other Factors to Consider

Panic by Public

The more EAB is hyped in the media and its proximity to Sterling, the greater the volume of phone calls the City will receive. It is essential that the public is aware of this problem and that their assistance is needed to control the insect, but it must be approached in a rational, professional manner.

Visual Impact

The loss of public trees on a given block will change the streetscape of that neighborhood. Even after replanting, a street that once had an established canopy arching over the road will not be a line of small, newly planted trees. To reduce a "shock" to one area, the City will stagger ash tree replacement throughout different neighborhoods.

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The City dedicates itself to planting two (2) trees in place of every one (1) tree that is removed throughout the City.

Emotional Effect

Many people have emotional ties to trees, especially large trees or ones that may have been planted to commemorate a special event. If a resident is told that their tree needs to be removed, especially one that is not yet infested, City staff will spend considerable time explaining the process. Informational brochures will be provided to any homeowner or business in close proximity to an ash tree intended for removal.

Timeliness of Removals

Given the large volume of trees and the cost of removal and replacement, the process of ash tree removal and replacement in Sterling will be phased out over ten (10) years.

Limited Budget

Due to the limited City budget, the plan to remove and replant infected ash trees will be staggered over a ten (10) year period, starting with the 2013/14 fiscal year.

Timeline

Winter 2011

- First letters received of EAB Management grants
- Tree Board and Tree Ordinance created

Fall 2012

- Tree Board conducts Ash Tree Inventory & Tagging in Sterling
- ArborJet gives City a presentation on EAB chemical treatment options
- IL Department of Agriculture contacts and speaks with City officials
- Assistant to the City Manager briefs Council on EAB
- EAB found in Dixon, IL
- EAB information put on City website
- City signs *IL Dept of Ag State of Illinois Emerald Ash Borer Compliance Agreement*

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City of Sterling Ash Trees & Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan

General Program

Purpose

The purpose of the Sterling EAB Management Program is:

1. If possible, prevent the spread of EAB through Sterling's ash tree population
2. Establish detection and inventory of ash trees
3. When EAB is found in Sterling, execute an eradication program

Public Education and Information Program

The purpose of this program is to raise public awareness of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation and its potential impacts, keep residents informed as to where the infestation is and where it may appear next, inform residents of what steps are being taken and why to address this concern, educate residents about the regulatory requirements in removing and properly disposing of infested trees, as well as advising what steps they can take to assist in this effort.

Printed Materials

The City will develop and distribute printed material to residents directly impacted by the infestation and as requested. Brochures and handouts will be available online. These printed materials will address such subjects such as "How do you tell if you have an ash tree and how do you know if it is infested?", "what are my options if my ash tree is infested?", "What is the City doing to address this problem?", and "Is there any assistance that the City can provide?"

Online Materials

In all publications and presentations, reference will be made to the City's website and the *Tree Page* as a way to receive additional information with links to other sites addressing the questions of Emerald Ash Borer. Printed materials will be available for download and printing on the City's website.

Utility Billing

The City may occasionally publish materials or include additional materials in the utility bill mailings about Emerald Ash Borer.

Presentations

The Tree Board may hold public information sessions if any group such as civic groups, homeowner associations or schools may so desire. It will be the City's intent to provide a brief overview from time to time at City Council meetings.

Local Access Television (Channel 11)

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Special programming will be identified (if available) or developed addressing such subjects as “How do you tell if you have an ash tree and how do you know if it is infested?”, “what are my options if my ash tree is infested?”, “What is the City doing to address this problem?”, and “Is there any assistance that the City can provide?”

Spokesperson

For specific questions, the City has designated an EAB spokesman, Assistant to the City Manger Hadley Skeffington-Vos. She can be reached via email hskeffington-vos@sterling-il.gov or by telephone (815) 632-6621. If you are aware of an ash tree in the public ROW, please call Sterling Public Works at (815) 632-6657.

Inventory

The Tree Board, in conjunction with a volunteer group and the Department of Forestry Volunteer Coordinator, conducted a tree inventory of public ash trees on September 29th, 2012. The results concluded there are about 213 public ash trees in Sterling. The results of this tree inventory can be requested at hskeffington-vos@sterling-il.gov.

Removal & Replacement Program

Over a period of ten (10) years, starting in the 2013/14 fiscal year, the City of Sterling hopes to eradicate the ash tree population in Sterling and thus mitigate the effects of the Emerald Ash Borer. Starting as soon as possible before the EAB potentially reaches Sterling is extremely beneficial.

Removal of ash trees will be based primarily on the most infected by EAB and thus the most hazardous ash trees. The City hopes to remove about 20 trees per year (200 trees over 10 years) in various locations across the City, so as not to burden one area at once. Again, priority will be given to infected and dying, thus hazardous, trees. Ash trees will be disposed of in the City dump site.

The City will replace the ash trees with a variety of recommended species. Each year, the City will send the request for 20 trees out to bid for the best prices.

The City dedicates itself to planting two (2) trees in place of every one (1) tree that is removed throughout the City.

Budget Impacts

The City will spread out the cost of dealing with EAB over ten (10) years. It is estimated to cost \$240,000 over the ten years, amounting to \$24,000 per fiscal year. Financing for this project will come from the General Fund.

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