



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Emerald ash borer found in more areas of the state

RALEIGH – Add Cabarrus and Mitchell to the list of North Carolina counties where the emerald ash borer has been discovered. The invasive pest, which was discovered in the Asheville city limits in early June, has now been confirmed in 27 counties.

EAB is a metallic green beetle that bores into ash trees and feeds on tissues beneath the bark, ultimately killing the tree. The signs and symptoms of EAB aren't always immediately noticeable because EAB damages the inside of the tree. Adult borers lay eggs on the bark of ash trees. When the eggs hatch, the larvae bore into the bark and feed on the transportation tissues of the tree. This disrupts the movement of nutrients and water within the tree, causing the tree's slow death, typically in three to five years.

The signs and symptoms of EAB infestation include thinning and dying crowns; increased woodpecker activity that causes the tree to look like it is losing patches of bark; small, 1/8-inch D-shaped exit holes where adult beetles emerged from the trees; galleries on the inside of the bark; cream-colored larvae; and epicormic sprouting, or sprouting from the main stem of the tree.

Host plants include all native ash trees and native white fringetree. The Chinese white fringetree, often planted for ornamental purposes, is believed to be resistant.

EAB, a non-native invasive insect from Asia, has been found in the following counties: Buncombe, Cabarrus, Catawba, Davidson, Durham, Forsyth, Franklin, Gaston, Graham, Granville, Guilford, Iredell, Johnston, Lincoln, Madison, Mitchell, Mecklenburg, Orange, Person, Randolph, Swain, Vance, Wake, Warren, Wayne, Wilson and Yancey.

The entire state of North Carolina is under a quarantine for EAB. This prohibits the movement of ash plant parts, the insect itself, ash nursery stock and all hardwood firewood into non-quarantined areas such as South Carolina or central Tennessee.

Adult EAB beetles are about a half-inch long and 1/8-inch wide. If their wing covers are pried up, their bodies are a metallic purplish-red color. In North Carolina, the adult EAB is expected to be active in late spring and early summer, likely April through June. EAB larvae may be found under the bark of the tree most of the year.

For more information about EAB, visit <http://ncforestservice.gov> and follow the links under the "Forest Health" section. To view current federal EAB quarantines, visit the national EAB website, www.emeraldashborer.info.

The spread of invasive insects in the state is often due to human activity through the transportation of infested wood products such as firewood. It is strongly recommended that people burn local or treated firewood to reduce the spread of invasive pests.

The North Carolina Forest Health Branch monitors the spread of invasive pests. People who suspect there is an infested tree in an area near them should contact their county ranger. The contact information can be found online at ncforestservice.gov, follow the links under the "contacts" heading.