

TREE CARE WORKER RISK ALERT: WORKING WITH INFESTED ASH TREES



Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)



What is EAB?

- ◆ EAB is an invasive insect discovered in the USA in 2002.
- ◆ EAB infests Ash trees which are common in residential and forest areas in New Jersey.¹
- ◆ EAB larvae cut off the water supply and cause trees to become dry and brittle.



Damage from EAB larva

What are the signs of EAB?

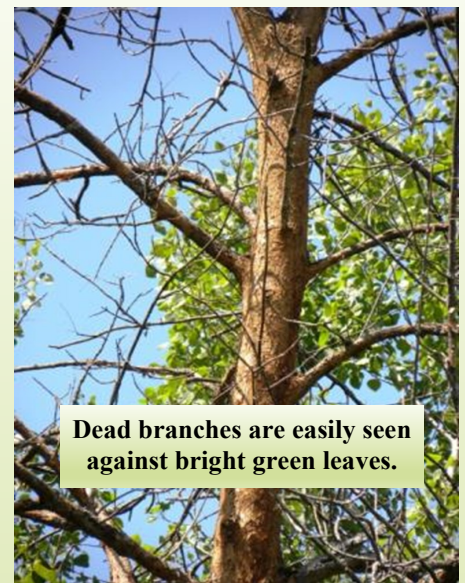
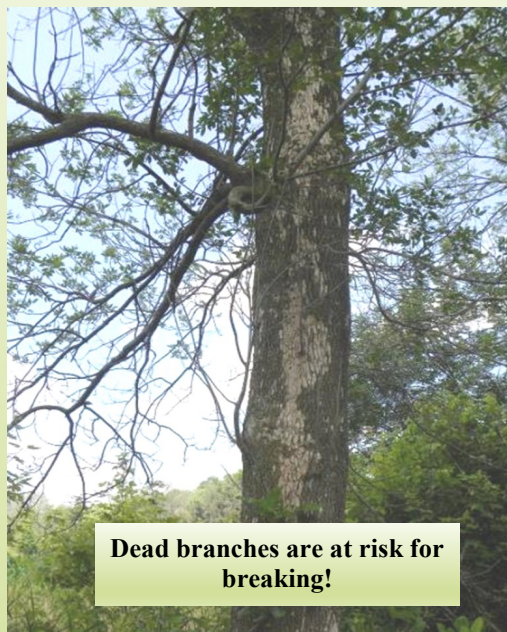
- ◆ Infested trees will experience canopy dieback, if not treated, this will eventually affect the entire tree.
- ◆ Other identifiers are: bark flecking, woodpecker marks, D-shaped exit holes in bark and excessive sprouting from the lower trunk of tree.



Canopy Dieback

Infested Trees are Dangerous

- ◆ If you are working with an infested Ash tree, it could pose a serious safety risk to you and your coworkers.
- ◆ Infested Ash trees become dry and brittle, therefore branches will break more easily than a healthy tree branch.



- ◆ Little to no stress on branches of infested trees will cause them to snap or shatter.
- ◆ Never climb an Ash tree that is showing symptoms of being infested by EAB.

For more information on EAB please visit:

- ◆ Emeraldashborer.nj.gov
- ◆ Emerald Ash Borer Network: emeraldashborer.info
- ◆ Rutgers Agricultural Experiment Station njaes.rutgers.edu
- ◆ NJ Chapter International Society of Arboriculture www.njaisa.com
- ◆ OSHA Safety and Health Topics: Tree Industry <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/treecare/>



TREE CARE WORKERS RISK ALERT: WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS FOR WORKING SAFELY?



EAB & Safety Tips

1. When working from the ground

- ◆ Always be on alert when working under an EAB infested tree. Little to no pressure will cause branches to snap or shatter.
- ◆ Always wear proper PPE such as safety glasses, hard hats and face shields when working with EAB infested trees.
- ◆ Never climb a dead or dying infested EAB Ash tree.



A dead Ash tree can be a scary sight and a safety hazard!

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2. When working with equipment

Chain Saw³

- ◆ EAB infested branches can be extra dangerous. Be sure to always use two hands when cutting, and be aware that EAB infested branches can shatter from chain saw vibrations.
- ◆ Always cut at waist level and below to prevent kick back, if you cut above your waist you are more prone to losing your balance.

Electrical Equipment³

- ◆ Always assume power lines are energized.
- ◆ Call the power company to make them aware of the job before working.

3. When working from heights

- ◆ Ensure you receive training prior to using any kind of aerial lift.
- ◆ Always use the proper fall restraint or fall arrest systems.
- ◆ Be sure there is a spotter on the ground to provide another point of view and establish a method of communication.



Employees must be line clearance certified to work near powerlines.

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WARNING!!

NEVER climb an EAB infested dying Ash tree

For more safety information visit:

- ◆ <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/treecare/>.
- ◆ http://www.nj.gov/health/workplacehealthandsafety/documents/occupational-health-surveillance/tree_alert.pdf

References:

1. <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/pi/prog/whatisiab.html>
2. Herms, D. A., McCullough, D. G., Smitley, D. R., Sadof, C. S., & Cranshaw, W. Insecticide Options for Protecting Ash Trees from Emerald Ash Borer. http://www.emeraldashborer.info/documents/Multistate_EAB_Insecticide_Fact_Sheet.pdf
3. Gilman, E. F., Duryea, M. L., Kampf, E., Partin, T. J., Delgado, A., & Lehtola, C. J. Assessing Damage and Resorting Trees After a Hurricane; Urban Forest Hurricane Recovery Program. https://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/65158/1531708/Assessing_Damage_and_Restoring_Trees_After_a_Hurricane_by_UF-IFAS_EP29100.pdf
4. Pictures from "Emerald Ash Borer in New Jersey" presentation at <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/pi/prog/whatisiab.html> and from Brian Skinner.