



EAB Stories and Lessons Learned...

Learning and sharing how communities are responding to Emerald Ash Borer

Part VII: Treatment

The cost to remove and replant all the city's public ash trees was calculated at \$750,000. They opted to treat their ash at a cost of \$40,000 per year. Terry Brennan, Director of Public Services for the City of Grosse Pointe Farms MI, shares the unique experience of a city treating their

EAB-infested ash trees. Grosse Pointe Farms is a very affluent community located on the east side of Detroit. The city is only 3 square miles in size and has a population of 10,000. One-quarter of the land in the city is a church, a school or a golf course. The community currently plants around 100 trees/year and is greatly dedicated to their trees. Grosse Pointe Farms succeeded in a treatment program to protect their American Elms against Dutch Elm Disease. They boast having the largest per capita population of elms in the USA. It is this success that set the precedent for treating their ash trees once EAB showed up in Michigan.

Shock Brothers Tree Care has been treating the city's elms and was subsequently hired to treat their ash trees. They use the Wedgle Direct Inject System to inject imidacloprid (Pointer) at the base of the trees spaced about 4 inches apart. In 2007 they injected 575 ash trees. Treatment cost was \$4.65 per diameter inch of the tree at the root flare (a private resident would pay \$8-\$10/inch). Since the start of the treatments the city has lost only 45 ash trees, from 637 down to 589, although this loss was attributed mainly to drought stress. Treatments must be done every year. A Shock Brothers representative explains, "The tree will "tell" you if the application is working. You will see a positive response the following year from the tree – bark healing and new shoot growth." Injections are timed to the emergence of adult beetles, mid-May through June, also the time black locust trees are flowering. "It is best to have at least 50–60% full canopy, although the best success is with 80–100% full canopy present. Even trees with advanced symptoms of infestation (bark splits with visible galleries beneath) responded to treatment."

While there is no question that treatments are prolonging the life of ash trees in this community, a question remains: Even though there is foliage, what is the structural integrity of the tree? During our site visit we saw many injected trees with bark cracks, galleries and callusing of wounds. Will these injuries pre-dispose the trees to a greater likelihood of failure? And still, the larger question: Is it worth it? Grosse Pointe Farms currently lacks data to assess the monetary benefits received from treated trees to justify the expense of long term chemical treatments.

- A lifetime of treatment costs must be weighed against removal and replanting costs. Loss of tree benefits should also be factored in.
- Treatment may not be a viable option for every public tree, but it would be a good option for individual homeowners and significant trees within the community.
- Highly infested and highly stressed ash trees don't respond well to treatment.

The University of Wisconsin has put together a publication about the various types of chemical treatments for EAB. *Emerald Ash Borer: Insecticide Options for Protecting Ash Trees and Their Effectiveness*
http://www.entomology.wisc.edu/emeraldashborer/article_052407.pdf .

The UW-Extension has put together a publication for homeowners interested in treating their ash themselves. *Homeowner Guide to Emerald Ash Borer Insecticide Treatments*
<http://www.entomology.wisc.edu/emeraldashborer/EAB%20Homeowner%20Insecticide%20Guide%20Final%202008.pdf> .

The first step in hiring a company to treat your ash trees is to find a reputable company, preferably one with an ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) certified arborist on staff. Visit <http://www.waa-isa.org/arborists/search.asp> .

For a resource to help your community and residents with treatment options, visit the Emerald Ash Borer Toolkit link at <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/uf/eab/> (Chapter 7 - Control).

For a more detailed version of this story visit [Lesson's Shared - Journal Entry 5](#).

Please share what your community is doing to prepare for EAB with others. Send ideas to Olivia Witthun, Urban Forestry Assistant olivia.witthun@wi.gov .

The seventh entry of EAB Stories and Lessons Learned was compiled by Northeast Region Urban Forestry Assistant Olivia Witthun and South Central Urban Forestry Assistant Kathy Gonzalez.