



PRESS RELEASE

1600 S. Withers Road • Liberty, MO 64068 • T: 816.439.4360 • W: www.ci.liberty.mo.us/LPR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 12, 2015

CONTACT: Chris Wilson, Parks and Open Spaces Manager, cwilson@ci.liberty.mo.us 439
.4384

Emerald Ash Borer Confirmed in Liberty

LIBERTY, Mo. – Three years after its first detection in the Kansas City area, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has now officially arrived in Liberty.

The exotic beetle, which threatens to kill nearly 5 million ash trees in the Kansas City area, has been confirmed from trees at two locations near Liberty's western boundary and a third location near the Liberty Community Center. All ash trees in Liberty will succumb to the borer in the next few years if left untreated, according to Chris Wilson, Liberty Parks and Open Space manager.

On May 1, Liberty Parks staff asked Kansas City Forester Kevin LaPointe to check out ash trees they suspected might be infested with EAB. LaPointe has been on the front lines of implementing a plan to treat or remove up to 20,000 ash trees on public property in Kansas City. Positive evidence of the borer, including a live larva, was found just west of I-35 and Highway 291, as well as just east of I-35 and Highway 152. Since then a third infestation in a tree near the Liberty Community Center has also been confirmed.

This spring, the City of Liberty used a Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) grant from the Missouri Department of Conservation to initiate a multi-year EAB Management Plan for the 220 ash trees that occur within the right-of-way along streets. Staff removed 30 ash trees along South Liberty Parkway and planted replacement trees a week ago. Ten more street trees are slated for removal in neighborhoods this month, and those will be replaced as well. The City began using insecticidal treatments on select trees in parks last May.

(more)

EAB in Liberty, p. 2

Wilson suggests that homeowners first determine if they have ash trees on their property, and then develop a plan to either treat or replace those trees over time. Various treatment options exist, but they vary in their cost, effectiveness and potential environmental toxicity. Wilson recommends working with a certified arborist if treatment is desired.

The City uses the injectable bioinsecticide TreeAzin to treat ash trees in parks and rights-of-way. Liberty was the first city in the Midwest to begin using the product, which is registered with the Organic Materials Review Institute.

To learn more about the EAB, signs and symptoms of infestation, and how to plan for its inevitable arrival as a home or property owner, visit the University of Missouri Extension website on the EAB -- extension.missouri.edu/treepests/emeraldashborer.aspx -- or emeraldashborer.info.

###