



NEWS

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE EXPANDS EMERALD ASH BORER QUARANTINE

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) has expanded its emerald ash borer quarantine to part of a second county infested with the tree-killing beetle.

In addition to 51 square miles of Kane County, where the pest was first detected in the state, the quarantine now includes 64 square miles of northern Cook County. The Cook County quarantine extends north to south from the Lake County line to the northernmost city limit of Chicago and east to west from Lake Michigan to Interstate 294.

“The quarantine was expanded to prevent the most common cause of the beetle’s spread – the inadvertent movement of infested wood products,” Agriculture Director Chuck Hartke said. “It prohibits the removal of such items as ash trees, ash limbs and branches, ash logs and lumber and ash wood chips larger than one inch in diameter from the quarantine area without a permit.”

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The boundaries of the Cook County quarantine were established using the results of a recently-completed ash tree survey that began after the emerald ash borer was confirmed in Wilmette. A second, more comprehensive, bark-stripping survey was recently initiated to verify the extent of the infestation and guide decisions on how to control the small, metallic-green beetle. The survey involves the removal of approximately 500 ash trees in and around the quarantine area. Workers then strip away their bark and examine them for beetle larvae, which can feast on a tree for several years before it shows visible signs of distress.

“While the survey proceeds, the department will contact municipalities and businesses that handle wood products to inform them of the quarantine and sign compliance agreements,” Warren Goetsch, IDOA division manager of Natural Resources said. “These agreements will help ensure the quarantine is followed and no potentially-contaminated products are transported outside the area.”

Anyone convicted of removing prohibited items from the quarantine area without a permit may be fined up to \$500.

The emerald ash borer was confirmed in Kane County June 9. It was discovered in Wilmette July 13 and the neighboring communities of Evanston and Winnetka shortly thereafter.

The beetle, a native of Asia, has killed more than 20 million ash trees since arriving in North America in 2002. Besides Illinois, infestations have been confirmed in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland and Ontario, Canada.

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