

Questions and Answers: July 2012 Changes to Emerald Ash Borer Quarantine

Q. Why did the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) change the regulatory policy for its emerald ash borer (EAB) quarantine?

A. Our current understanding of EAB biology, behavior, and distribution has led the USDA to alter its quarantine policy. Beginning July 1, 2012, we are modifying our regulatory policy to permit unrestricted movement of regulated articles within Federal contiguous quarantine areas, except in the protected areas in Illinois and Indiana. Regulations pertaining to the movement of regulated articles out of an EAB quarantine area remain unchanged.

Q. How will the EAB quarantine policy change interstate movement of regulated articles?

A. Historically, EAB quarantine areas in different States were treated as separate regulated areas. Under the new policy, contiguous quarantine areas that cross State borders—and are not associated with the protected areas in Illinois and Indiana—will be treated as a single regulated area and will not be subject to regulatory restrictions. However, the conditions for movement of regulated articles with destinations in the protected areas in Illinois and Indiana are unchanged and require a limited permit or Federal certificate. A limited permit or Federal certificate is also required to move regulated articles out of an EAB quarantine area.

Q. Who is impacted by the Federal policy change?

A. Individuals and industries in EAB quarantine areas that handle ash wood material (nursery stock, green lumber, mulch, etc.) and hardwood firewood may be impacted by the policy change. The policy change includes entire States or selected areas in: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Q. How are industries and businesses that handle ash wood material and hardwood firewood impacted?

A. You can transport ash material and hardwood firewood within the contiguous EAB quarantine areas freely; however, you will need a limited permit or certificate to transport such materials to destinations in the protected areas in Illinois and Indiana, to a county not quarantined for EAB, or to an EAB quarantine area that is not contiguous. If you have questions about the status of a particular State or county, contact the State's regulatory authority; contact information is available online at www.nationalplantboard.org/member/index.html.

Q. Has USDA removed its EAB quarantine?

A. No. Parts or all of 15 States are federally quarantined for EAB. However, the USDA has modified its regulations to allow for unrestricted movement of regulated articles within contiguous EAB quarantine areas, except when destinations are in protected areas in Illinois and Indiana.

Q. Are State EAB quarantines still in place?

A. Yes. There are interior State EAB quarantines that restrict the movement of EAB-regulated articles. You should contact your State regulatory authority before moving EAB-regulated materials intrastate (within the State); go to www.nationalplantboard.org/member/index.html for contact information.

Q. Where can I move EAB-regulated materials without a permit or certificate?

A. Movement of EAB-regulated articles is unrestricted within a contiguous federally quarantined area, except when the destination is in the protected areas of Illinois and Indiana.

A map of EAB quarantine areas is available on the USDA's Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/downloads/eab_quarantine_map.pdf.

Q. When would movement of regulated articles require certification or permits from the Federal Government?

A. Transporting EAB-regulated articles into the protected areas of Illinois or Indiana requires a limited permit or Federal certificate. A limited permit or Federal certificate is also required to transport regulated articles out of EAB quarantine areas. In addition, EAB-regulated articles moving internationally require a Federal phytosanitary certificate.

Q. What do you mean by “Federal contiguous quarantine”?

A. There are Federal EAB quarantines in 15 States: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Historically, EAB quarantine areas in different States were treated as separate regulated areas. Under the new policy, a Federal EAB quarantine area in one State that shares a border with a Federal EAB quarantine area in another State is “contiguous.” There are two Federal EAB contiguous quarantine areas: the smaller one includes EAB quarantine counties in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin that share borders; the larger contiguous EAB quarantine includes counties where borders are shared among eight States. These two contiguous areas are not subject to regulatory restrictions.

However, the conditions for movement of regulated articles with destinations in the protected areas in Illinois and Indiana are unchanged and require a limited permit or Federal certificate. A limited permit or Federal certificate is also required for movement of regulated articles out of EAB quarantine areas.

Q. Are all of the areas under quarantine for EAB contiguous?

A. No. Some EAB quarantine areas represent a separate and distinct regulated area contained within a single State. For example, Wayne County in Missouri, Brown County in Wisconsin, and Ramsey and Hennipen counties in Minnesota are federally quarantined for the pest but are not contiguous. Movement of regulated articles out of these areas requires a limited permit or a Federal certificate. A limited permit or Federal certificate is also required when regulated articles are moved from either of the two contiguous EAB quarantine areas into these separate and distinct regulated areas or into non-quarantine areas.

For the most current information, please review the EAB quarantine map (see link below) and contact your local USDA State Plant Health Director (www.aphis.usda.gov/StateOffices). Or, call the toll-free EAB hotline at 1-866-322-4512.

Map link: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/downloads/eab_quarantine_map.pdf

Q. Can I move firewood now?

A. Federal EAB quarantines prohibit the movement of hardwood firewood out of EAB-regulated areas—

whether it’s being moved to a protected area or to an area not quarantined for the pest. Untreated firewood can harbor invasive wood pests and diseases, so USDA continues to promote the “Don’t Move Firewood” message as part of its public outreach and educational efforts. Not moving firewood long distances and making sure to purchase only treated firewood are two best practices to support healthy trees and forests.

The movement of hardwood firewood within the Federal contiguous EAB quarantine areas, (excluding the protected areas in Illinois and Indiana) is no longer federally regulated. However, States within the EAB quarantine area may have their own restrictions. Please check with your State regulatory authority for information regarding firewood movement.

Q. Did USDA abandon the EAB program?

A. No. The USDA has modified its EAB quarantine regulations in order to focus its resources along the perimeter of the quarantine areas, which helps maximize its effectiveness in preventing the human-assisted spread of EAB. In addition, USDA continues surveying for the pest in 47 States to monitor EAB infestations and locate any unknown beetle populations. Lastly, USDA continues working with other agencies and cooperators to pursue biological control and research initiatives to help protect and maintain ash trees within our Nation’s landscapes and forests.

Q. If USDA is no longer regulating movement within contiguous quarantine areas, why is it continuing to survey for EAB?

A. Results from EAB surveys not only support current decision making, but also provide guidance for future program initiatives. For example, the results guide decisions on where to place regulatory boundaries, deploy biological controls, and target our public outreach campaigns.

Q. What is the difference between moving EAB-regulated articles interstate versus intrastate?

A. The EAB Program is a cooperative initiative between the USDA and State regulatory authorities. The USDA is responsible for regulating ash material or hardwood firewood when it moves from one State into another State—this is *interstate* movement. State officials have regulatory authority when ash material or hardwood firewood moves anywhere within a State— this is *intrastate* movement.

Q. Who do I contact regarding State EAB quarantines and whether I need a permit to transport ash material or hardwood firewood?

A. Your State regulatory authority can advise you about EAB quarantines and permits for transporting EAB-regulated materials intrastate (within the State). For contact information, go to www.nationalplantboard.org/member/index.html/.

Q. Will the contiguous Federal quarantine boundaries change?

A. The boundaries of the contiguous Federal quarantine (see map link below) will expand when EAB is detected in a new county that borders the current contiguous quarantines. For the most current information, contact the USDA State Plant Health Director in your area or call the toll-free EAB hotline at 1-866-322-4512.

Link to map: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/downloads/eab_quarantine_map.pdf

Q. Since EAB-regulated articles can move without restriction in the contiguous quarantine areas, do I need to continue to work with USDA?

A. Yes. There may be Federal and/or State quarantines in effect for pests other than the EAB. Therefore, maintaining a relationship with the USDA and/or your State regulatory authority is important. In addition, EAB-regulated articles moving internationally require a Federal phytosanitary certificate, which you would need to work with USDA to obtain.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.