

# 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.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ 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?

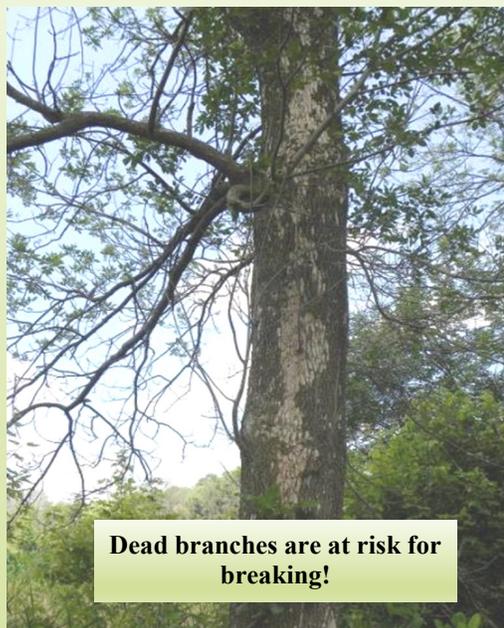
- ◆ Infested trees will experience canopy dieback, if not treated, this will eventually affect the entire tree.
- ◆ Other identifiers are: bark flecking, woodpecker marks, D-shaped exit holes in bark and excessive sprouting from the lower trunk of tree.



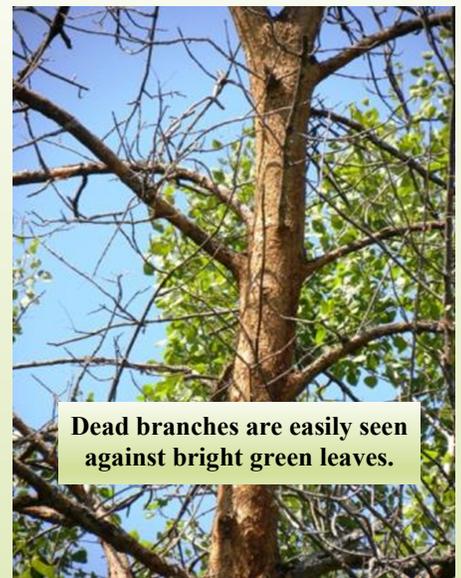
Canopy Dieback

## 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.



Dead branches are at risk for breaking!



Dead branches are easily seen against bright green leaves.

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



D-shaped exit holes indicating presence of EAB.

# 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 Saw<sup>3</sup>

- ◆ 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 Equipment<sup>3</sup>

- ◆ 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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New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

### 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](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](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](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.