

EAB Trapping Program

Video Script

The Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services is responsible for protecting Florida's plant industry which is continually bombarded with new plant pests and diseases.

Florida is currently on the lookout for a dangerous pest of ash trees – the emerald ash borer.

The emerald ash borer has been on the move since its US arrival in 2002.

It has already killed millions of ash trees in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin

The most common way that the emerald ash borer and other destructive wood-boring insects are introduced is through infested firewood brought in from outside areas.

Control of any wood-boring insect, once established, is very difficult. The best cure is prevention. Moving firewood, nursery stock, and other ash wood materials in areas infested with emerald ash borer is regulated by the infested states and federal government. Florida is in the process of developing regulatory rules that will limit the movement of firewood and other unprocessed wood products into and within the state.

Florida has four known varieties of ash trees: white, pop, green, and pumpkin which occur primarily throughout the northern part of the state.

The Department has placed traps in Florida counties identified as high risk areas because of the possibility of infested firewood being brought in by campers from states where emerald ash borer has been found.

200 traps have been placed and are being monitored monthly. Trap contents are examined by entomologists at the Division of Plant Industry's headquarters in Gainesville.

The emerald ash borer is a metallic green beetle about ½ inch in length. When disturbed, adults fly readily to avoid capture and are often difficult to observe.

On ash trees with signs of decline and canopy dieback, look for split bark, serpentine larval galleries, and D-shaped exit holes.

Larvae feed on the inner bark of ash trees, disrupting the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. Extensive larval damage can lead to tree death.

You can help prevent the introduction of wood-boring insects by following these simple guidelines:

Do not transport firewood from other states or within Florida. Emerald ash borer can hitchhike on firewood infesting new areas at an alarming rate.

When building a fire, use local firewood only.

Burn all firewood at your campsite before you leave.

Do not take any firewood home with you.

If you think you have seen an emerald ash borer or a diseased ash tree, contact the Division's helpline at 888-397-1517.

To further protect Florida's plant industry, report any suspicious plant pests or diseases.

Don't pack a pest – when you travel, don't pack food or other products in your luggage that might contain harmful pests and diseases.

And purchase only certified plants from registered nurseries.

Help protect our native ash trees and our natural environment by preventing the introduction of harmful pests and diseases like the emerald ash borer.