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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

Emerald Ash Borer Discovered Near Lincoln

Quarantines, Regulations Remain in Effect

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LINCOLN, Neb. -- The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) has announced a second discovery of the emerald ash borer (EAB) in Greenwood, NE. This confirmation places this destructive insect within 15 miles of Lincoln and six miles from Waverly. NDA's quarantine zone currently includes *Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, Washington and Dodge* counties. It specifically restricts the movement of firewood and wood waste from the zone.

"The most effective way to control the speed at which EAB spreads is for everyone to follow the NDA's quarantine," said Nebraska's Deputy State Forester, John Erixson. "EAB is a slow moving insect; it only moves a mile or two on its own. However, as soon as we start haphazardly moving things like firewood around, the insect will spread like a fire across the state."

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), determine the quarantine boundary and issue regulations designed to slow the rate of spread of the insect. The quarantine specifically regulates, "hardwood firewood and mulch, ash timber products and green waste material...to assist in the prevention of human-assisted spread of the pest into uninfested areas."

"Following the quarantine and restrictions will help slow EAB's spread, giving homeowners, communities and land managers time to start proactively removing or treating their ash trees," added Erixson.

Regardless of the borer's current location, municipalities and anyone managing large numbers of ash trees outside of the quarantine areas should take steps now to prepare for EAB. The Nebraska Forest Service (NFS) recommends focusing on removal and replanting of trees now, giving new trees several years to become established. Treating ash trees is an option; although, treatments will not save trees forever. Each treatment will need to be continually reapplied and will only prolong the tree's life, not save it. Any treatment should not be carried out before the insect is confirmed within 15 miles of the trees.

"The safest bet for homeowners, and in some cases villages and cities, is to contact a certified arborist," said Mark Harrell, Forest Health Program Leader with the Nebraska Forest Service. "Certified arborists have access to the latest information on the effectiveness of chemicals and can help assess if a tree is worth treating or should be removed."

Based on the experiences of other states, the NFS predicts that more discoveries of EAB will take place over the summer. While it will take a few years to see large scale losses of ash trees in these areas, it is critical that preemptive action, such as early removals and treatments, takes place now.

“We expect to see significant losses in the canopy of our community forests and the benefits they provide. EAB will lay a heavy financial burden on communities and homeowners for ash tree removal, disposal and replacement,” said Nebraska’s State Forester, Scott Josiah. “However, we must replant with a wide range of tree species. That way, when the next invasive pest arrives, our kids aren’t in the same position—facing the loss of millions of beautiful trees and nearly a billion dollars in costs.”

Nebraska becomes the 27th state to discover EAB. It is projected that Nebraska’s taxpayers and homeowners will spend over \$961 million on ash tree removal, disposal and replacement of nearly one million trees in our communities.

More information about the emerald ash borer, the NDA quarantine, finding an arborist, and recommendations for homeowners and municipalities can be found at www.eabne.info.

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