

A New Pest for Marion County, The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)
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As of June 10th, 2016 Marion County has been quarantined for a destructive forest pest known as the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). A group of USDA officials detected EAB in the Kimball area on May 18th which prompted a county-wide quarantine prohibiting the movement of ash trees and ash tree products. Marion County is not the only county to be quarantined for this destructive pest as it is now counted among 48 out of Tennessee's 95 counties that have been quarantined as well, most of which being in West TN.

The Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is a destructive forest pest that is believed to have been introduced into the United States in the 1990's on wood packing material from Asia. Since then, the destructive insect has been found in numerous states including our home state of Tennessee. According to protectnforests.org (a partner of the TDA, APHIS, UT Extension, and others) EAB was first detected in Tennessee at a Knox County truck stop off I-40 in July of 2010. By 2011 the number of Tennessee counties under quarantine reached six and in 2012 the counties quarantine doubled. During the years 2013, 2014, and 2015 three, eighteen, and eight more counties were added to the quarantine respectively.

This emerald colored borer beetle, although almost glamorous to look at, is incredibly destructive to ash trees and can typically completely kill a full grown tree within three years of initial infestation.

The larvae (the immature stage) feed on the inner bark of ash trees, disrupting the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from April until September, depending on the climate of the area. In Tennessee most EAB adults would fly in May and June. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees. When they emerge as adults, they leave very unique D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

Officials from the TDA urge Marion County residents and visitors to help prevent the spread of EAB:

- **Don't transport firewood, even within Tennessee.** Don't bring firewood along for camping trips. Buy wood from a local source. Don't bring wood home with you.
- **Don't buy or move firewood from outside the state.** If someone comes to your door selling firewood, ask them about the source, and don't buy wood from outside the state.
- **Watch for signs of infestation in your ash trees.** If you suspect your ash tree could be infected with EAB, refer to the EAB Symptoms Checklist and online EAB Report Form to alert state plant and forestry officials, or call TDA's Consumer and Industry Services Division at 1-800-628-2631.

For more information, contact Matthew Deist with Marion County UT-TSU Extension at (423) 942-2656.