



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Contact:
Rhonda Santos (508) 852-8044
Lyndsay Cole (970) 494-7410

USDA Urges Residents to be on the Lookout for the Asian Longhorned Beetle

Beetles Expected to Emerge in July

WASHINGTON, June 29, 2011--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is asking for the public's help in detecting and preventing the spread of the Asian Longhorned Beetles (*Anoplophora glabripennis*), a serious pest of hardwood trees.

Federal, state and local partners are currently working to eradicate active Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) infestations in portions of Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey. ALB was detected in Ohio this month and surveys are currently being conducted to determine the size and scope of the infestation. Eradication has been declared from infestations in Illinois and Hudson County, N.J. While the ALB does not pose a risk to human health, it is extremely dangerous to hardwood trees. ALB is known to attack and kill healthy maple trees, as well as ash, birch, elm, European mountain ash, golden rain, hackberry, horse chestnut, katsura, London plane tree, mimosa, poplar and willow. To date, the beetle has caused the destruction of more than 72,000 hardwood trees in the United States alone.

“July is when we start to see adult beetles emerge after a winter spent growing and developing deep inside the tree they've infested, and they are easy to see if you know what to look for,” said Rebecca Bech, deputy administrator for APHIS' plant protection and quarantine program. “It is important to familiarize yourself with the signs of an ALB infestation and monitor your own trees and trees in your community for this destructive pest.”

The ALB is a large beetle. Its body is approximately 1- to 1-1/2 inches long and is shiny black with random white spots. Its antennae, which are longer than the insect's body, are banded black and white and it has six legs. Its feet are black and sometimes appear with a bluish tint. Adult beetles typically first appear during the month of July and will continue to be present throughout the summer and into the early fall months. Adult ALB can be found anywhere, including on trees, benches, patios and outdoor furniture, sides of houses and sidewalks, etc.

The beetle can also be found, and unknowingly transported, in firewood. Cutting a tree into firewood will not kill the ALB developing inside it, and adult beetles can still emerge from the wood, thereby spreading an ALB infestation to new areas. Firewood from ALB regulated areas must be used within the regulated area. If you see signs of ALB infestation on your firewood, please call the USDA or your state department of agriculture immediately. Firewood

- more -

also presents a very real threat to the Nation's forests, not only from the ALB, but other invasive species, such as the emerald ash borer (EAB), as well. APHIS is asking residents not to move firewood and to purchase firewood locally from the area where it will be burned.

If you see the ALB, or other signs of an ALB infestation, or if you have questions about control and eradication efforts, please call your local APHIS state plant health director, your state department of agriculture or the ALB cooperative eradication program in your state. For residents in New England, to reach the ALB cooperative eradication program in Massachusetts, call (866) 702-9938. For the ALB cooperative eradication program in New York, call (866) 265-0301 or 877-STOP-ALB. For the ALB cooperative eradication program in New Jersey, call 1-866-233-8531 or 866-BEETLE1. For Ohio residents, call (855) 252-6450.

If you find an ALB, you can help to stop the spread by capturing it, placing the insect in a jar and freezing it. This will preserve the insect for identification. Early detection of ALB infestations is very important because it can limit an infested area and the number of trees destroyed. More information about the ALB can be found at www.aphis.usda.gov and click on "Asian Longhorned Beetle" under the "Hot Issues" heading. You may also log on to www.beetlebusters.info.

#

Note to reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet and through really simple syndication (RSS) feeds. Go to the APHIS news release page at www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom and click on the RSS feed link.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).