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Facts About Ohio's Emerald Ash Borer Quarantine

To help protect the state's landscapes and natural resources from the ash-tree killing insect, Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) has quarantined parts of the state where the pest has been discovered. The quarantine, which makes it illegal to take ash trees, parts of an ash tree, and all hardwood firewood out of infested counties, is designed to slow the spread of the insect by limiting the movement of materials that may harbor EAB.

The insect, which has killed millions of ash trees in Michigan, is a death sentence for ash trees, killing them within three to five years of infestation. The larvae feed on the cambium layer, the tree's live tissue just beneath the bark. This cuts off the tree's nutrients and water and essentially starves the tree to death. Larvae overwinter beneath the bark and can be inadvertently transported via firewood, logs, or nursery stock – the sources of most of Ohio's infestations.

State Quarantine to Contain the Pest

An executive order signed on September 16, 2003, authorized a quarantine to prevent the spread of EAB. It is illegal to move ash trees, parts of an ash tree, and all hardwood firewood out of these quarantined areas:

- Allen, Auglaize, Butler, Champaign, Clermont, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Darke, Defiance, Delaware, Erie, Fairfield, Franklin, Fulton, Hancock, Hamilton, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Licking, Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning, Marion, Medina, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Ottawa, Paulding, Portage, Preble, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Van Wert, Warren, Wayne, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot counties
- Entire state of Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan (per federal quarantine)

Ash Tree Material and Hardwood Firewood Cannot Leave Quarantined Areas

ODA, with assistance from USDA officials, is enforcing EAB regulations to halt the movement of ash-tree materials and firewood. The following regulated articles are subject to the quarantine established in rule 901:5-56-02:

- Ash trees (Fraxinus) of any size
- Ash limbs and branches
- Any cut non-coniferous (non-evergreen) firewood
- Ash tree bark and ash tree wood chips larger than 1 inch
- Ash logs and lumber with the bark, outer one-half inch of sapwood, or both attached
- Any item made from or containing ash tree wood capable of spreading EAB
- Any means of conveyance capable of spreading the pest

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These quarantined articles can move into a quarantined area and between neighboring quarantined areas but cannot leave without a compliance agreement, under penalty of law. Violators face fines of up to \$4,000. It is also illegal to take these materials out of the state of Ohio without federal certification, per federal quarantine.

Compliance Agreements Required to Move Quarantined Materials Out of Quarantined Area
Quarantined materials are prohibited from leaving the state’s quarantined areas without an ODA compliance agreement. These signed agreements dictate handling practices to ensure EAB is not inadvertently introduced to new areas. Compliance agreement holders accomplish this by removing and destroying infested parts of the tree and by restricting movement of quarantined materials to times of the year when the larvae are immobile under the bark.

State and federal officials are working with businesses in quarantined areas to get compliance agreements in place, which allow the safe utilization of ash wood. Interested parties should contact USDA officials, 1-866-325-0023; or ODA officials, 1-888-OHIO-EAB. More detailed information is outlined in an ODA fact sheet, “*Facts About Ohio’s Emerald Ash Borer Compliance Agreements.*”

Federal and Other State Quarantines

In addition to Ohio’s quarantine, citizens need to be aware of and abide by the federal EAB quarantine. The federal quarantine does not change Ohio’s quarantine within the state. It is still illegal to move quarantined materials out of Ohio’s quarantined areas. The federal EAB quarantine, which is an additional safeguard to protect the nation’s ash trees, prohibits the movement of ash tree materials and firewood out of the entire state of Ohio without federal certification. This quarantine also prohibits the movement of these materials out of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. Fines for violating USDA’s quarantine are steeper than Ohio’s. Information on federal and other state quarantines can be found at www.emeraldashborer.info.

