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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Ohio Ag Department Adds Hamilton County to Emerald Ash Borer Quarantine**

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (May 23, 2007) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture today added Hamilton County to the list of Ohio’s Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) quarantined counties, after discovering the ash tree-killing insect in Anderson Township. The quarantine, designed to slow the spread of EAB, prohibits the movement of ash trees, parts of an ash tree, and all hardwood firewood out of Hamilton County.

Department officials, after receiving a call from a concerned homeowner, discovered an infested ash tree off of Newtown Road in Anderson Township. The landscaped tree showed visible signs of EAB, including the insect’s distinctive D-shaped exit holes in the bark. This marks the state’s most southern point of infestation and illustrates the insect’s inadvertent movement through infested ash tree materials.

All of Hamilton County is now quarantined, making it illegal to take hardwood firewood and ash tree materials into neighboring uninfested counties. These materials can move freely between Hamilton and Warren counties but cannot leave the two infested counties. Violators face fines up to \$4,000. It is also illegal to take hardwood firewood and ash tree materials out of the state of Ohio, per federal quarantine.

Firewood dealers, businesses, or woodlot owners interested in marketing and transporting ash trees or firewood out of quarantined areas can do so only with a department-approved compliance agreement. These agreements stipulate handling practices that mitigate the spread of EAB.

Since it was first discovered in Ohio in 2003, EAB has been identified in 28 counties: Allen, Auglaize, Cuyahoga, Delaware, Defiance, Erie, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Marion, Medina, Mercer, Miami, Sandusky, Seneca, Ottawa, Paulding, Warren, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot counties. All or parts of these counties have been quarantined to stop the movement of firewood and ash logs, which are the largest contributors to the spread of EAB. For the latest quarantine map, go to [www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab](http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab).

Ash trees infested with EAB typically die within five years. The pest belongs to a group of metallic wood-boring beetles. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, and when they emerge as adults, leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

For more information on the latest quarantine or firewood movement, call 1-888-OHIO-EAB.

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**Note to Editor:** *Photo-ops and interviews with officials will be available between 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. today. Call Melissa, 614-282-9652, to line up an interview and for location details.*