

Emerald Ash Borer

What is Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and how does it kill ash trees?

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a non-native, invasive, wood-boring beetle. It has devastated ash tree populations wherever it has become established by completely killing ash trees. EAB kills ash trees when the larvae tunnel into and feed on the living tissue of the tree just below the bark. When the larvae and feeding become excessive, the flow of nutrients and water throughout the tree stops. This “girdling” or starving the tree of nutrients, kills it from the top down.



What impact could EAB have on Crow Wing Power's lines?

EAB will eventually kill nearly all, if not all, ash trees throughout our service territory. Trees that are infested by EAB become very brittle and often break near ground level. This can have to potential to result in widespread outages and damage to property. Tree workers cannot climb infested trees because of the danger of failure, making removal difficult and expensive.



Why should I care about Emerald Ash Borer?

Minnesota has one of the largest populations of ash trees in the U.S. with an estimated 900 million trees growing in urban and natural forests. Since all species of ash trees are susceptible to EAB, the potential economic and environmental impacts of losing all of these trees are substantial. When ash trees grow in home landscapes, the cost to treat or remove and replace these trees can reach thousands of dollars.



What impact could EAB have on Crow Wing Power's lines?

Crow Wing Power has developed a plan that includes removing healthy ash trees before they become infested. We are learning from other utilities that it is critical to be proactive. EAB populations quickly expand, making a reactive approach unmanageable and costly. Crow Wing Power prioritizes removal of ash trees in areas already infested with Emerald Ash Borer.

We will also be strategically removing ash trees in other areas of our service territory where there is a high density of ash trees that could strike the power lines. This process will take several years to complete. Due to restrictions by the State of Minnesota, we cannot move the wood from the trees, so the material will be left on site.

Is there anything Crow Wing Power members can do to identify EAB and prevent it from spreading?

Members should be on the lookout for woodpecker activity, since damage and infestation can be hard to see in the first year. Birds will feed on the larvae on the main trunk of the dead or dying tree.

Ash trees on your property of high value can be protected by treating them. You may wish to consult with an ISA Certified Arborist for more information. Treatments are ongoing and can become costly. Begin planting trees now that can replace the ash trees on your property.

DO NOT MOVE ASH MATERIALS, ESPECIALLY FIREWOOD!

This is one of the most common ways for infestations to be moved to new locations. Please give Crow Wing Power your cooperation in removing ash trees. If you do not plan to treat your ash trees, we would like to remove them before they become infested.

Indicators of Emerald Ash Borer Infestation



Left: Signs of woodpecker damage on an infested Ash tree.

Right: Photo of the Emerald Ash Borer and its exit holes in the tree.



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