

OPTION 2— TREAT IT

There are insecticide treatment options if you would like to save important trees in your yard.

- For most homeowners, treatment is not feasible on a larger landscape level, but can be used to prevent single tree mortality if the trees are still healthy. (less than 25% die back in the canopy)
- Keep in mind that controlling insects that feed under the bark with insecticides has always been difficult and will require treatment for several years. This can be costly and time consuming.



Photo by: greenvalleypest.net

- Insecticides that can effectively control EAB fall into four categories: (1) systemic insecticides that are applied as soil injections or drenches; (2) systemic insecticides applied as trunk injections; (3) systemic insecticides applied as lower trunk sprays; and (4) protective cover sprays that are applied to the trunk, main branches, and foliage.
- Some insecticides are marketed for use by homeowners while others are intended for use only by professional applicators. Please read “Insecticide Options for Protecting Ash Trees from Emerald Ash Borer” at www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/insectsdisease/eab/ for more information.
- Ultimately, the best option may be to consult with a professional applicator (foresters, arborists, etc.) on whether or not to treat your ash and what to treat them with. Contact your local DCNR service forester, Penn State Extension office, or county conservation district for a list of forestry professionals.

OPTION 3—LEAVE IT ALONE

You do not have to treat or remove dead or dying trees.

- If your dead tree is located in your yard or along a street, it will likely pose a hazard over time and should be removed immediately. However, when left standing in a woodlot, these trees provide excellent wildlife habitat, creating sheltered cavities for mammals, nesting sites for birds, and structure for a variety of other organisms.
- However, SAFETY is a top priority — if you think that the tree could be a hazard for you or others, please be safe and remove it.

Ultimately, the decisions regarding your ash trees are yours as a landowner. You can cut trees, treat them, or leave them alone as wildlife habitat. A combination of the three may be the best tool for managing your landscape.



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MY ASH TREES ARE DYING —



Adult Emerald Ash Borer (enlarged)

WHAT DO I DO?



(Actual Size)



Photo by Barrett Wiggins, Deer Park Lumber

A White Ash tree infested with the exotic beetle, Emerald Ash Borer. Their larval feeding eventually girdles and kills branches and entire trees.

First Steps in Addressing Dying Trees

Tens of millions of ash trees have been killed by the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in the Midwestern and Eastern states. Consequently, this leaves homeowners wondering what to do with the ash trees in their yards and woodlots.

Studies have shown that there is 99% mortality of ash trees within 3-4 years of emerald ash borer infestation.

EAB has been confirmed in most of Pennsylvania, with only the far eastern counties yet to be confirmed. However, it is only a matter of time before this destructive insect is found throughout the entire state and northeastern United States.

There are several options for landowners to consider when dealing with dead or dying ash trees:

Option 1: Cut It

Option 2: Treat it

Option 3: Leave It Alone



Photo by Paul Reining, R Ranch

OPTION 1— CUT IT

Harvest for Lumber:

- If you have ash in your woodlot that has the potential to be valuable saw timber, it may be best to receive guidance from a professional forester instead of hiring a logger directly or cutting the ash yourself.

- Selling timber can be a complicated business. Forestry practices, regulations, and market prices are always changing, so it's best to get guidance from a variety of forestry professionals before making plans for your ash trees. Professional foresters and loggers, as well as sawmill staff and timber consultants, can all provide valuable advice.
- The DCNR Bureau of Forestry or lumber companies provide at no or minimal charge services such as harvesting advice, management plans, and lists of loggers, professional foresters, and timber buyers. Visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/yourwoods/serviceforesters to find a DCNR service forester in your area at no charge. This is the first step in determining whether or not you have valuable saw timber.
- For a fee, professional foresters can provide services such as timber appraisal (cruising), handling the timber sale from start to finish (including the bidding process), and working with the logger to ensure that the landowners goals are met.
- Professional foresters can also consider other forest management options at the same time as the ash harvest, ensuring that you get the most value out of all your timber. These could improve the overall forest health, wildlife habitat, or feasibility of regeneration, as well as threats of other invasive species impacting your region's forests. They will help make sure your goals are met and the project is completed safely using best management practices.
- If you choose to hire a logger directly and they determine that the timber has no value and want to be paid to cut it, you may want to consider getting a second opinion, or consult with a forester about the value of your ash. Just because your ash trees may be in decline does not mean that they are not valuable.

Harvest for Firewood:

CAUTION: CUTTING ASH TREES YOURSELF IS VERY DANGEROUS

- The first sign of EAB is dead and dying tops. EAB infests and feeds on the top of the tree first. Tops that are dead are known as “widow makers” because they can break and fall unexpectedly when cut. Declining and dead ash is VERY dangerous to cut for this reason.



An ash tree in decline due to EAB. Note the heavy woodpecker activity discoloring the bark.

- Ash is an excellent firewood, but please use caution when cutting. To help slow the spread of EAB, don't move firewood. Buy it local and burn it where you buy it. It is illegal to move firewood into Pennsylvania from another state without proper certification. Due to EAB and the threat of other invasive pests, some counties in PA have quarantines that prohibit moving firewood out of the county or quarantine area. Check state and federal regulations before moving any EAB regulated materials including firewood.
- If you only have a few hazard trees to remove around the yard, hire a reliable, insured, licensed arborist/tree service company. Consider joining with your neighbors to hire a single company for a large group of tree removals to cut costs.
- Before hiring a company, obtain: Estimates from multiple companies, proof of insurance, written estimates of cost, written agreement on disposal/site cleanup requirements, and references.