

Region provides tips to stump the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer



By Chris McGowan

On May 14, Stacey Bowman, Invasive Species Specialist of York Region Forestry, enlightened a group of approximately 45 people about the status of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in our area.

The Emerald Ash Borer is a wood-boring beetle, metallic green in color that is approximately one and a half cm in length and attacks all native species of ash trees including green, white, black, blue, pumpkin, marshall seedless, autumn purple and summit, with the exception of Mountain Ash.

York Region is experiencing an infestation of EAB and any Ash tree is vulnerable.

?Do not plant Ash trees? said Bowman. ?If you have an ash tree and suspect it may be suffering from EAB, you are best to call in a certified Tree Care specialist for their opinion.?

A common indicator that your tree may be infested is if woodpeckers are frequenting the tree regularly. The EAB can kill an Ash tree in one to three years by eating the soft tissue under the bark when in the larvae stage, thus creating burrows.

A tree care specialist can possibly help you preserve your tree with a safe insecticide, however, the treatment requires holes to be drilled into the trunk of the tree with insecticide cartridges that have to be replaced every two years for ten to fifteen years in total, and even then there is no guarantee your tree will survive.

The EAB came to North America from China, hitting the Southern USA and working its way up to Canada and has been in York Region since 2008.

It is now in York Region Forests throughout Aurora, Newmarket and as far north as Georgina.

York Region will be removing all of the Ash trees on its regional roadways and replacing them with some other type of tree, however, it goes without saying that the amount of trees that the EAB is expected to destroy is massive, as our forests are approximately 8 per cent Ash and no tree is safe.

There are tree planting incentives within the Region that you may be able to take advantage of to help replenish your tree loss. Bowman encouraged everyone to ?replace the trees, and become more educated regarding the EAB?.

She also encouraged everyone to refrain from moving wood, especially if it is Ash, as that is how the beetle is transferred through

human intervention.

Currently, scientists are trying to determine if there is a natural, safe predator that can be introduced to help eliminate EAB, but they need to ensure negative issues will not incur as a result.