



Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness Week Underway

Campaign aims to guide private property owners who have ash trees

Winnipeg, Aug. 12, 2019 – Trees Winnipeg officially launched **Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness Week** this morning. The week-long awareness and education campaign is directed at residential and commercial property owners who want to learn more about the impact of the emerald ash borer (EAB) on ash trees. EAB was first detected in Winnipeg in 2017.

About 72 per cent, or 256,000 of Winnipeg's 356,000 ash trees, are on private property. Other cities that have experienced EAB have lost up to 99 per cent of untreated ash trees within two to 10 years. It is still uncertain how much EAB will impact Winnipeg. However, **once an ash tree dies from EAB, it dries out quickly and can become unstable and hazardous**. Many of Winnipeg's ash trees are large, mature shade trees, meaning once they start to decay, there may be risk to people, property and vehicles.

"The emerald ash borer is destructive to ash trees because it's quick, and it's deadly," Trees Winnipeg board chair and certified arborist **Gerry Engel** told a small crowd at an event on Ash Street. "We need Winnipeg's help sharing the word that there are serious risks ahead. Residential and commercial property owners are urged to educate themselves now so they can take action."

Social media pushes and website information will outline best practices, options and information. Trees Winnipeg also advises the public to consider four main steps:

1. **INVEST.** Water ALL trees well, plant a range of species, don't move firewood
2. **ASSESS.** Get a qualified and insured professional arborist to examine your trees
3. **PLAN.** Explore your options and decide on a plan that's right for you
4. **SAFETY.** Manage your ash tree as it dies so no one gets hurt.

"The City of Winnipeg's Urban Forestry Branch is working hard to manage the emerald ash borer and other invasive tree insects in public spaces such as parks and boulevards," said **Mayor Brian Bowman**, City of Winnipeg. "With most ash trees on private property and in close proximity to our homes, families, neighbours, businesses and vehicles, I encourage all to listen to the experts and plan."

Green ash is the second most common tree species in the city, comprising of about one-third of Winnipeg's entire urban forest canopy. Ash trees on public land are valued at approximately \$437 million.

"My ward is home to some of the best-known neighbourhoods when it comes to Winnipeg's iconic urban canopy," said **John Orlikow**, City of Winnipeg Councillor for River Heights-Fort Garry. "While the eventual loss of ash trees on public and private land is unfortunate, planning and safety are paramount. It's time to follow Trees Winnipeg's four main steps and listen to and share its advice."

Trees Winnipeg is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to protecting, preserving and educating the public on the urban forests and urban environments in Winnipeg and surrounding communities. Please follow and share at hashtag **#EABpreparednessweek**

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