

Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan Mauston, Wisconsin

Background

In October of 2016, an infestation of the emerald ash borer (EAB) was confirmed in the City of Mauston, WI. The City made a publication on October 7th to alert the public to the problem and inform about the spread. Juneau County was quarantined the following day by state and federal government. The quarantine prohibits the removal of ash wood and ash residue and the movement of all hardwood fire wood outside Juneau County.

EAB is a beetle that destroys all species of ash (primarily green ash) by boring into the tree, eating the phloem tissue (innermost layer of bark) and disrupting the uptake of nutrients and water. EAB was first found in the United States in Michigan in 2002. Since then, it has migrated to 20+ states and Canadian provinces decimating the ash tree populations where it is found. It was first detected in Wisconsin in 2008. When the borer is first identified in a community, it is thought to have been present for 4-5 years. The mortality rate of the ash skyrockets after that with the trees dying in the next 2-5 years.

Purpose

By implementing this management plan, the City is attempting to mitigate the disruption and dangers to its urban forest caused by the infestation of the EAB. Taking a proactive approach to this invasion will enable the City to address public and private needs in an efficient and effective manner.

The City will endeavor to distribute the costs associated with certain and massive tree death over a manageable time period, as well as lessen the social and economic impact that such an extensive loss will have on the quality of life in our community.

This will also provide systematic guidance to enforce the City ordinance already established. (Sec. 32-11. - Tree standards)

Ash Removal

In 2013, the City inventoried all of the ash trees located in the public right-of-way, in parks, and at the City Cemetery. At that time, the City identified 152 ash trees.

- 53 Park Trees
- 13 Cemetery Trees
- 86 Street Trees

The vast majority of these trees were characterized in fair to good condition with few at excellent condition at that time.

In March of 2020, the Mauston Tree Board authorized the creation of a management plan to mitigate the EAB issue. City crews began removing ash trees to start the plan. The tree board also authorized the City Forester to make the decisions on park trees to be treated or removed, based on current conditions to maintain a safe environment.

The City will send one final informational letter in August, 2020 to residents and will start implementing the management plan in early 2021.

For urban forestry management, the Mauston Tree Board has created a priority scale for removals. This will help to prioritize ash trees that are in violation of City ordinance (Sec. 32-11 – Tree Standards) without taxing local resources.

- **City Priority 1 – All Street ash trees**
- **City Priority 2 – Non-treated Park trees**
- **Private Priority 1- Dead with public or an utility target**
- **Private Priority 2 - All other dead or near dead**

Both City and Private Priority 1 will occur at the same time within the first two years. Then, both City and Private Priority 2 will follow and be completed within the next two years. At any time during the process a tree may change priorities due to deteriorating conditions of the tree.

The City Forester will review each tree and determine when the tree will be removed per ordinance. The Zoning Administrator will be notified. Residents will receive notification that the tree has been condemned and will have 60 days to provide proof that the removal will be completed. Failure to comply, the City will contract a company to remove the tree and the resident will be billed. Failure to pay, will result in the bill applied to their taxes.

Treatment

The City of Mauston Forestry staff has the equipment and chemicals needed to effectively treat ash trees. The product is injected into the trees and is good for 2 years, at which time, needs to be retreated or removed based on condition.

City owned trees- that meet conditions will be treated at recommended intervals for the remainder of their life, concurrent with all phases of management plan and monitored.

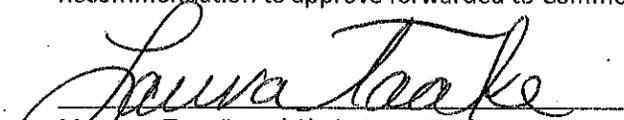
Private trees- The Mauston Tree Board has approved a program for City of Mauston residential trees to be treated at cost of time and materials to owner, by the City Forestry staff, only if tree meets treatment standards. Bill and copy of records will be mailed and reminder calls will be made when time for retreatment comes.

There is no guarantee that treatment will prevent tree death but has greatly proven to extend life of tree for many years.

Resources

The City of Mauston has a Forester that is an International Society Arborist (ISA) Certified Arborist on staff. The City will give consultations per request of City residents. On City web site are links to other resources and a list of other services provided.

Recommendation to approve forwarded to Common Council.

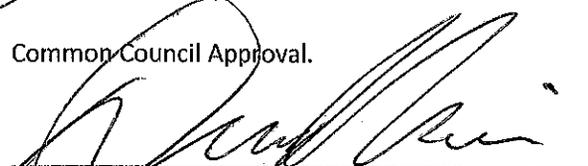


 Mauston Tree Board Chair, Laura Taake

July 17, 2020

 Date

Common Council Approval.



 Mayor, Dennis Nielsen

July 23, 2020

 Date