

Emerald ash borer spreading into Chicago, threatening thousands of ash trees

Staff Chicago Business Journal

The emerald ash borer beetle is likely to prompt Chicago to cut down about 10,000 ash trees on public property, as the insect's infestation spreads through the Midwest.

According to a report by the [Chicago Sun-Times](#), the [beetle has already made it to Chicago](#), and officials have cut down about 145 ash trees in a Northwest Side neighborhood. DNAinfo Chicago reported earlier this month that [another 250 trees in that ward](#) have been scheduled for chopping this year due to the beetle's work.

While it may not seem like much more than a nuisance now, the ash borer can wreak havoc. In Michigan, the Sun-Times quoted one expert saying, ash trees are largely wiped out because of it, and it's actually surprising Illinois has largely avoided it so far.

A city spokesperson told the Sun-Times that Chicago has \$1.6 million set aside for battling the beetle and preventing its spread through the 85,000 ash trees on public property. However, the report pointed out, there are also about 300,000 ash trees on private property in the city, and it's not clear how many homeowners might be proactively treating their trees, a process that generally must be done every three years and costs around \$100.

On the city's web site, it states that [35,000 ash trees will be treated this year](#), with another 35,000 next year, and has hired 26 laborers to work on the trees. The city has also set up an emerald ash borer hotline for people who suspect the beetle has reached trees near them: 312-74-BEETL.

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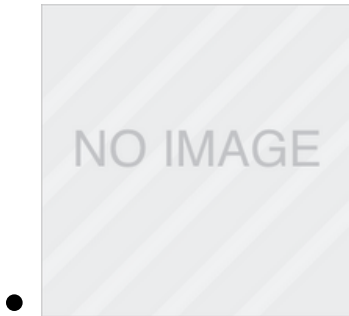
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