



OFFICE
OF THE
MAYOR

Infested Ash Tree Removal Underway; Contribute to Their Replacement

For Immediate Release --- *Wisconsin Rapids, WI.* Last May, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) confirmed the presence of emerald ash borer (EAB) in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. At that time, the DNR placed Wood County and neighboring counties under quarantine, prohibiting the removal and transfer of ash wood products and hardwood firewood to non-quarantine areas.

Supported by a partial grant from the DNR, the City conducted a survey and rating of public trees, 265 of which are ash trees. Ash trees that are heavily infested with EAB on public lands and in street right-of-ways rated "poor" to "very poor," and are being removed by City staff. (The telltale sign of infestation in a dormant tree are the hundreds of woodpecker holes that, from a distance, make it appear that the tree's bark is falling off.) Tree removal is most visible along the East Riverview Expressway, where crews have worked during the past few weeks.

In addition to removing the poorest-quality ash trees, the City will, for the next three years, apply an annual treatment for the approximately 33 percent of ash trees rated as being in the "best" condition.

While the infestation of our ash trees by EAB creates a major loss, residents can play a part in replacing them. The City hopes to replant a diverse selection of tree species in affected areas, to maintain the benefits street trees provide. In harmony with that goal, the Mayor's Council on Beautification has begun its annual Community Tree Sale. Residents have the opportunity to purchase a tree for themselves, or for their neighborhood. The choices of Whitespire Birch, Royalty Crabapple, Red Jewel Crabapple or Weeping Willow are all available for \$65 per tree. (Other tree varieties are available upon request.)

For those who wish to plant a tree in remembrance of someone special, memorial plaques are also available for an additional \$35.

To place an order, contact Sue Winch at 715-213-1747 or swinch9@gmail.com. Orders must be received by the third week of April, and trees will be ready for pick-up at the City Garage in early May.

Zachary J. Vruwink, Mayor

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