



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE ERADICATION PARTNERS DETERMINE NEXT STEPS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Extensive Tree Surveys Planned for Summer 2009

WASHINGTON, June 17, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will survey Worcester County, Mass., trees that could host populations of the invasive Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) throughout the remainder of 2009.

The extensive tree surveys will look for signs of insect infestation, and will help Massachusetts ALB program officials to determine the full extent of the ALB infestation in Worcester, as well as the towns of Holden, West Boylston, Boylston and Shrewsbury. The ALB program will concentrate tree surveys in the area immediately surrounding the core of the infestation and progressively expand outward. Surveys will take several years due to the number of trees requiring evaluation.

ALB program officials expect the 2009 ALB survey to find infested hardwood trees in the area, and impacted trees ultimately will be removed. Residents should also expect to see, and report to program officials, adult ALB this summer. Peak ALB emergence takes place in July, August and September. It is important to note that a native insect, the white spotted sawyer, is similar in appearance to the ALB. This insect is often seen in spring and summer on and around conifer trees throughout New England all the way into North Carolina. Please do not hesitate to report any suspicious insect similar in appearance to the ALB. The ALB program will help callers determine if an insect is a white spotted sawyer or ALB.

The ALB eradication program will start chemical tree treatments against the invasive insect in spring 2010, when more of the tree surveys are completed. The surveys done in 2009 will define the areas for chemical treatment in 2010. In addition, with more infested trees identified and removed this year, the success of 2010 chemical treatments at reducing the overall beetle population in the regulated area will be enhanced. Chemical treatment is used to prevent and eradicate infestations; however, treatment cannot save an ALB-infested tree. Chemical treatment and host removal are the two control actions applied within the ALB program.

Homeowners may independently treat their trees or hire private contractors; however, the ALB program will not fund private treatment. Treatment of individual trees may provide protection to that specific tree the year that it is treated, but area-wide treatments are required to eradicate the beetle. Whether treated by the ALB program or privately, any treated tree that is determined to be infested in subsequent survey inspections will be removed. The ALB program treats trees for a minimum of three consecutive years.

Door hangers, Web postings and tree postings will provide advance notice of survey, replanting or removal activities carried out this summer, fall and winter. ALB program employees will seek access to private property to evaluate trees for ALB and to remove infested trees.

The Massachusetts ALB Cooperative Eradication Program is comprised of USDA-APHIS, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the City of Worcester, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service and the towns of Holden, Boylston, West Boylston and Shrewsbury.

For answers about the beetle and program activities, please contact the Massachusetts ALB program at 1-866-702-9938 from anywhere in New England. Log on to www.aphis.usda.gov or <http://massnrc.org/pests/alb/> for more information about ALB, including pictures and where to report a suspected beetle.

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