

PRESS RELEASE

AUGUST 28, 2009

Today and yesterday I have been in conversations with Brian Kunn from the Department of Agriculture as well as Jack Bennett the City's Engineer and Jerry Schaefer the Superintendent of the City of Franklin's Public Works Department regarding their discovery of the presence of Emerald Ash Borer. The Department of Agriculture was contacted and samples were sent out to experts for verification. This morning I received a call confirming that the experts had concluded that indeed the sample was confirmation of the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer.

The City of Franklin and Milwaukee County have become the next stop in the emerald ash borer's march into the forests and municipalities of Wisconsin. In recent years, the City has been monitoring the impending threat of this pest and has paid close attention to reports from the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture, and neighboring states and municipalities that have been battling this insect.

The Common Council had, in fact, already directed the City's staff, the Environmental Commission and the Board of Public Works to investigate what might effectively be done to keep the emerald ash borer at bay and what the City's response should be. That investigation is still underway, but it was this very awareness of the emerald ash borer that led employees of our Public Works Department to recognize the warning signs and to immediately contact the Department of Agriculture to investigate a potential infestation near Southwood Glen Elementary School. I appreciate the work of City Engineer Jack Bennett and Superintendent Jerry Schaefer and his staff at Public Works for their efforts in recognizing this threat to our community.

The City of Franklin will continue its diligence and will work cooperatively with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture and other agencies that are involved in the control of this insect. These are the experts in Wisconsin from whom Franklin will take its lead. In the coming days, weeks, and months, the guidance they provide will likely become the cornerstone of our efforts to help control and manage the spread of the emerald ash borer.

The City staff under my control will remain diligent; my cabinet officers and I will work with the State and other governmental agencies and we will do our part in the battle against this destructive pest.

As we find out more about the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer in Franklin and in Milwaukee County we will communicate this to the press and to the general public.

Please be aware that the administrators involved in this issue will be in close contact with me as the Mayor and those governmental agencies that will help us in the potential control and management of this pest that has already been found in many areas of Wisconsin.

Tom Taylor  
Mayor of the City of Franklin