St. Louis Park
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Identifying and treating emerald ash borer – Text Alternative

Do you have an ash tree on your property?

A woman in a high-visibility neon yellow vest stands outside.
Vanessa: I'm Vanessa Larson, I'm a tree inspector here with the City of St. Louis Park. We're talking about ash trees today. This is an ash tree behind me. The bark sort of has this diamond shape to it. Or you could think of it as like a basketball net.
Vanessa steps to the ash tree behind her and touches the bark.

Are your ash trees infested with emerald ash borer?

Vanessa: We're seeing a lot of ash trees being infested by the emerald ash borer, which is an invasive insect.
A metallic green glittery insect, the emerald ash borer, on a tree bark.
Vanessa: And actually, the damage from the insect is visible in the bark. So what you're looking for is this blonding where woodpeckers have chipped away at the bark of the tree. And that's a pretty good sign that your tree is infested with emerald ash borer.
A woodpecker pecks at the bark of an ash tree. The tree trunk and branches have several blond spots where the bark has been chipped away.
Vanessa: They are going after the larvae of the insect which tunnels through the cambium layer of the tree, right underneath the bark and kind of dries it up. The tree can't then draw water up from the ground, and they have no defense against it. So without external preventive treatments, the trees will die as a result of the insect.

What should you do if your ash trees show signs of emerald ash borer infestation?

Vanessa: So if you think you have an ash tree that's infested with emerald ash borer, it's important to have either one of the city's tree inspectors come out to look at it or a certified arborist. If you catch the infestation early, you can treat your tree and save it.
A tree trunk has a small round tag saying "Rainbow Treecare," indicating that it's been treated for emerald ash borer.
Vanessa: Once it becomes severely infested, it will need to be removed. And the longer that you wait, the more brittle the trees become, which makes them more expensive to remove and also increases the risk that large limbs will fall.

For more information and resources, please visit our website at www.stlouisparkmn.gov/trees