



Michigan Department of State Police

Emergency Management Division Informational Letter

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**TO: Affected Local Emergency Management Coordinators in Southeast Michigan,
EMD District Coordinators**

SUBJECT: Emerald Ash Borer – Update

On Monday, May 10, 2004, state officials from the Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources and State Police Emergency Management Division met with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) representatives for the purpose of discussing the Emerald Ash Borer infestation problem in southeast Michigan and to conduct a scheduled preliminary damage assessment (PDA) of the affected core area.

During the meeting, state experts outlined in a presentation the seriousness of the Emerald Ash Borer problem and discussed the public safety concerns of allowing the infected trees to stand in the identified core area. This information and other supporting documentation were also detailed in the Governor's request to the President for Federal assistance.

Despite the state's informational and educational efforts, the PDA team and representatives from FEMA declined to perform a preliminary damage assessment and informally indicated that the request for a presidential disaster declaration would be denied. Additionally, the United States Department of Agriculture provided FEMA representatives with a detailed methodology for categorizing the risk potential of the infected tree sites and they also provided tour site plans for each of the core counties in preparation for the preliminary damage assessment. A FEMA representative did agree to view one site in the City of Westland but indicated that site visit would not constitute a preliminary damage assessment and would not affect the anticipated denial of the presidential disaster request.

Although the state of Michigan has not received a formal denial of the presidential disaster request, we do anticipate receiving written notification from the FEMA within the next two weeks.

The State of Michigan will continue its ongoing efforts to combat the Emerald Ash Borer problem and will pursue and explore other means to address this matter with Federal Government Officials. We will keep you informed of future developments as we work together to address this very important matter.

Sincerely,

JOHN ORT, CAPTAIN
Deputy State Director of Homeland Security
and Emergency Management

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