

USDA to Continue Tree Treatments in Chicago for Asian Longhornes Beetle

by John Dodd and Jim Rogers

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will treat approximately 4,000 trees susceptible to the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) in Chicago. APHIS will begin the treatments April 18, as a critical part of its on-going ALB cooperative eradication program's effort to prevent further infestation of this destructive pest. The trees, located around Chicago's Oz Park, will be treated with the insecticide imidacloprid, which has displayed promising results in past treatments. Program officials, through the use of certified pesticide applicator contractors, will administer the treatments by either injecting the insecticide into the tree through small capsules placed at the base of the tree's trunk or by injecting it into the soil surrounding the tree. Each site will be closely monitored.



Asian Longhorned beetle larva.

PHOTO BY KENNETH R. LAW,
USDA APHIS PPQ, WWW.FORESTRYIMAGES.ORG

The insecticide is dispersed through the tree's vascular system. This enables the insecticide to reach ALB adults feeding on small twigs and leaves and the larvae feeding beneath the bark of host trees. Imidacloprid is currently used by some lawn service companies to kill lawn grubs and in some domestic pet treatments to kill fleas. The larvae of the ALB bore into healthy hardwood trees and feed on living tree tissue and heartwood. Later, throughout the summer, adult beetles emerge from exit holes and briefly feed on the leaves and small twigs of host trees. To fight this destructive invader, agriculture officials removed and destroyed 1,533 trees in and around the city of Chicago. APHIS and its cooperators undertake eradication by imposing quarantines, conducting intensified visual inspections around confirmed sites to delimit infestations, remove infested and high-risk exposed host trees and chemically treat host trees as part of an area-wide integrated pest management strategy. The goal is to eliminate this destructive insect from Chicago before it can establish itself elsewhere.

Residents can assist in the eradication effort by allowing project officials access to their property to treat trees. For more information on the treatment program, please call 312) 742-3385. The public can also help by looking for ALB, which is about 1 to 1.5 inches long, has a shiny jet black body with distinctive white spots and long antennae that are banded with black and white. To report a sighting of this insect, call 1-800-641-3934.

APHIS, USDA's Forest Service and Agricultural Research Service, Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation's Bureau of Forestry participate in the ALB cooperative eradication program.



Adult Asian longhorned beetle.

PHOTO BY DONALD DUERR,
USDA FOREST SERVICE, WWW.FORESTRYIMAGES.ORG

For more information, visit the APHIS Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/alb.

Source: APHIS