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Arlington Hts. Eyes Helping EAB Treatments



Resident Scott Jameson presents research information on emerald ash borer during Monday's packed house village board meeting in Arlington Hts.

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[Arlington Hts. Eyes Helping EAB Treatments](#) By TIM O'CONNOR Journal & Topics Reporter
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Arlington Hts. residents may soon request \$50 from the village to help combat emerald ash borer.

The village board gave unanimous preliminary approval to a cost-sharing program Monday night, Apr. 9 that would allow residents to apply for 50% up to \$50 for treating ash trees on public parkways.

The program would be for a one-time treatment within the next two years and have a sunset date of Oct. 31, 2013. It will also work retroactively for those who have already paid to treat their trees.

The village board must still approve the program at an upcoming regular meeting.

Roughly 13,000 ash trees sit on public land in Arlington Hts., 1/3 of the total public trees. The emerald ash borer could potentially wipe out that entire population in the coming years.

Arlington Hts. has spent the past year promoting a People's Choice program to help residents treat parkway trees out of their own pockets. Residents have appeared at many meetings since 2011 pleading with the village board to adopt some kind of cost-sharing program but the board chose to wait until after they tackled the 2012-13 fiscal year budget.

With that budget recently passed, trustees were able to see how much money they could spend on such a program.

The program is expected to cost the village between \$200,000 and \$650,000, according to Village Manager Bill Dixon. That cost could swell to \$20 million over the next several decades if treatments are continued every two years, but the board is only willing to fund the first treatment at this time.

Dixon added that even the \$200,000 tab for the next two years could prove to be high if only those who have already expressed interest in treating their trees participate.

The village recently approved an \$11.5 million bond issue to fund the removal and replacement of all ash trees as the invading bugs infect and kill them over the next few years. The initial \$200,000 funding for treatments will come out of the village's \$2 million budget for emerald ash borer this year. Any additional money needed will have to come from new property taxes.

Board members seemed pleased with the limits suggested by staff and said information about the effectiveness of treatments was constantly evolving.

Several residents said they were encouraged by the village's willingness to look at the program and Trustee Joseph Farwell argued treating the trees was within the village's guidelines and duties.

"I truly believe this is a basic service which we're charged to protect," he said.