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Emerald ash borer spreads rapidly through Evanston's parkway ash trees

And money to replace trees is running out

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Evanston officials report that the invasive emerald ash borer is rapidly spreading through the city's parkway ash trees, forcing forestry workers to remove infected trees.

But the need to remove the trees has outpaced the [funds](#) required to replace them, city officials said, adding that nearly 500 parkway ash trees have been removed in the past year.

The city is asking residents to consider [donating](#) to a "reforestation fund," which was established in 2011 after repeated severe storms damaged public trees. Money from the fund will be used to speed the pace of replanting trees in areas where the ash borer has forced the removal of ash trees.



In 2006, when the ash borer was first detected in Evanston, the city had more than 4,000 ash trees on its parkways. That number represented about 12 percent of the city's 33,000 public trees, officials said.

Roughly half of the city's ash trees have either been removed or are tagged for removal, officials said. Forestry workers have attempted to control the spread of the [insect](#), but thus far no effort has proven successful enough to warrant widespread use, officials said.

Several city blocks have been hit hard by the insect, officials said, including blocks of Asbury, Ashland, Colfax, Darrow, Dempster, [Dodge](#), Elmwood, Ewing, Hartzell, Jackson, McDaniel, Oakton, Ridge, Sherman and Simpson.

This year, forestry workers hope to replace one-third of the trees on the blocks most affected. The remaining two-thirds should be replaced in 2013 and 2014, officials said.

For trees that are not heavily affected by the ash borer, the city allows residents to treat their ash trees on the parkway by getting a permit for Tree-Age, a chemical injected into the ash tree. Homeowners are not allowed to inject trees with Tree-Age themselves; instead the forestry department grants a permit, and a licensed contractor must administer the product.

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