

## Purple insect traps



Trap near 7666 Waste Operations  
us to participate in the monitoring program.”

You may have noticed purple “boxes” hanging in area trees lately. These are three-sided insect traps for monitoring the spread of a non-native invasive insect that has killed several million ash trees in the eastern United States and Canada. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture has installed over 3500 of them in ash trees throughout the state. Working with the state we’ve placed several traps on the Oak Ridge Reservation to help determine the extent of the infestation.

“The insect, called the emerald ash borer, hasn’t been detected in Roane and Anderson Counties, which is home to the Department of Energy Reservation”, reports Greg Byrd, forester with the ORNL Natural Resources Program. “Some of our forests are only a couple of miles from the Watt Road site where it was first detected within our state. Since we are so close and stand to experience significant impacts, it benefits

He discourages anyone from handling the traps. While they are non-toxic to people and wildlife, the outsides are coated with a very effective adhesive – think of a big “roach motel” turned inside out.

OK, but why are the traps purple? Research has shown this order of insects is attracted to this color. Folded within the trap are two potent lures that simulate the odor of an ash tree under stress and attract the bright metallic green insects. The insects land on the surface, but find they cannot leave - the glue ensures they remain as statistics for the monitoring program.

While the adult insects eat leaves, the larvae do the damage, drilling into and feeding on the inner bark of ash trees. That interferes with the tree’s ability to transport water and nutrients. Underneath the bark, the insects are hidden from view and can be accidentally relocated when dead or dying trees are cut down and hauled away.



Adult Emerald Ash Borer

People are urged to buy firewood near where they camp and not to carry it from one area to another. Knox, Loudon, Blount, Grainger, Claiborne and Sevier counties are under state and federal [quarantines](#) that prohibit hardwood firewood, ash logs, ash seedlings or ash bark to be moved outside these counties without approval.

Also, the department asked that any traps that are blown out of trees be reported to the [Emerald Ash Borer hotline](#) at 1-866-322-4512.