



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **ADDITIONAL ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE INFESTED TREES FOUND IN STATEN ISLAND**

### *Recent Detection Follows Discovery of Beetle in 2007*

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced the discovery of 13 maple trees infested with Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) in Staten Island, N.Y. Due to this find, APHIS will expand the current treatment and inspection boundaries in place since the initial ALB detection in Staten Island in spring 2007.

Inspectors working for the ALB eradication program, who cooperate with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, surveyed the area in December 2008. On the last day of December, inspectors found 12 infested red maple trees on undeveloped property owned by NYSDEC and one infested Norway maple on a neighboring property. This area was specifically targeted for survey based on the location of the infested trees found in 2007 and a scientific understanding of the insect's behavior and potential for spread in this type of terrain.

"Some of the trees on the NYSDEC property had the perfectly round, 3/8 inch in diameter exit holes that indicate beetles have emerged from the trees in past summers, and all the trees had egg sites indicating beetles have laid eggs," said Christine Markham, director of the national ALB program. "A growth ring analysis determined the infestation is four years old."

The infested trees will be removed this month, before any adult beetles can emerge. In addition, the New York ALB cooperative eradication program will remove 25 high-risk, exposed host trees located in close proximity to the infested trees. The infested and high-risk host trees are located within the NY state quarantine; however, they are several hundred feet beyond the area where chemical treatments of ALB host trees were completed during the spring of 2007 and the spring of 2008.

New York State Agriculture commissioner, Patrick Hooker said, "We still believe that this serious pest can be successfully eradicated through early detection, rapid response and interagency cooperation and teamwork. To further our efforts in eradication, we have added approximately two square miles to the existing quarantine area to prevent the movement of wood to areas known not to be infested with this pest."

The Staten Island quarantine zone will now be 10 square miles (up from 8 square miles) as a result of the December/January ALB detection. Numerous residential properties lying east of South Avenue and west of Willow Road East will become part of the ALB expanded quarantine area. The quarantine zone for the entire state of New York is anticipated to increase from 140 square miles to 142 square miles. Because of its location, the detection will require the expansion of the chemical treatment program to include additional ALB-host trees located within one-half-mile radius of the 2008 detection. This will add approximately 8,200 trees to the 17,900 trees that will be treated for the third time during the spring 2009 treatment period.

"ALB is a serious threat to New York's forest resources," said Robert Davies, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation director of State Lands and Forests. "Vigilant monitoring identified this area of infestation. We are working closely with our city, state and federal partners in order to ensure this damaging invasive pest does not spread to adjoining communities and neighborhoods."

The ALB was first discovered in New York in 1996, and quarantines currently exist on Long Island in an area bordering the Nassau County and Suffolk County boundary line and also in the Islip area of Long Island. Portions of Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Staten Island are also quarantined. Quarantines are put in place to regulate the movement of firewood, green lumber, nursery stock, tree limbs and other woody materials that serve as hosts for the invasive ALB.

"The ALB is the most serious insect threat the city has ever faced--one that if left unchecked could kill half of our trees," said New York City Parks commissioner, Adrian Benepe. "The beetle lays eggs on, bores into, feeds on and ultimately kills otherwise healthy hardwood trees. This recent discovery on Staten Island is a reminder that this persistent beetle will remain a real threat to the City's landscape and ecological health unless we step up awareness, eradication efforts, and funding."

A mature ALB is about 1 to 1.5 inches long, has a shiny, jet black body with distinctive white spots and long antenna banded in black and white. The adult beetles are most evident between June and October. As developing larvae, ALB tunnel through the heartwood of various tree species during the winter months damaging the pathways that move water and nutrients throughout the tree. This tunneling ultimately kills the tree. The goal is to eliminate this destructive insect from the United States before it can establish itself elsewhere.

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Note to Reporters: A map of the new Staten Island regulated area, including treatment locations, can be found at the USDA-APHIS Web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom>, click on "Asian Longhorned Beetle" under the "Hot Issues" heading. In the blue box to the right of the page, there are links for reporting infestations, identifying the ALB and maps of regulated areas and treatment areas.

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