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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **Emerald Ash Borer Infesting Canal Winchester Trees**

*City Requests Residents' Assistance in Removing Affected Trees*

CANAL WINCHESTER- The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an insect from Asia that kills ash trees. This invasive pest was first discovered in the United States in Detroit, Michigan in 2002. EAB has since spread to Ohio, and is now affecting ash trees throughout central Ohio, including Canal Winchester.

“We’ve been preparing for the Emerald Ash Borer for several years,” said Canal Winchester Urban Forester Dick Miller. “Now that it’s here, we’re working to help residents identify these trees and understand the benefits of removing them while they are still living.”

Miller explained that the benefits of removing an ash tree while it is still alive include being safer and less expensive. A dead tree poses a potential fall hazard, which causes varying levels of concerns based on tree size, location and condition. Additionally, the cost of removing a living tree is 20 to 40 percent less than removing one that has already died.

The city began the Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan in 2007, with the goal of gradually removing and replacing ash trees in street right of ways and public places. There are currently 167 public street trees that are native or selected forms of ash trees in Canal Winchester. The city has recently sped up its EAB management plan, and estimates that it will take about three years to remove and replace the remaining 167 ash trees.

While there are pesticides on the market that may kill 80 to 90 percent of EABs, there are no known preventions or cures. Treating a tree in an infested area will only prolong the inevitable demise of the tree. For this reason, the city will not attempt to save any public ash trees.

Trees that are on private property are the responsibility of the private property owner. There are perhaps a thousand or more ash trees on private property in the city. It is ultimately the decision of private property owners whether to retain, treat or remove a live tree on their property but the city’s urban forester is available to offer advice.

“Residents can call the city and I will come out to confirm whether or not a tree on your property is an ash tree and whether or not it has already been affected by the Emerald Ash Borer,” said Miller.

The city recommends that residents who plan to have an ash tree removed contract with an ISA Certified Arborist to ensure the tree is removed safely. The city also encourages residents to replace removed trees with a species appropriate for the site. To assist with this effort, the city is offering replacement tree seedlings as they are available. Residents can either present a copy of receipt showing the removal of an

ash tree from a tree removal company or provide a before and after photo of the ash tree site on their property. In addition, the city will look at the annual tree give-away as a chance to replace lost ash that have been removed on private property with other species of trees.

“We currently have about 20 replacement tree seedlings available for the public,” shared Miller. “As funding becomes available or as our budget permits, we will continue to add additional replacement trees to our reserve.”

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**Editor’s Note: A photo of an infested ash tree and a photo of healthy ash tree leaves are attached. For anyone wishing to shoot their own photo/video of a healthy or infested ash tree, our urban forester can either recommend or show you good examples of these trees in Canal Winchester.**

