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Emerald Ash Borer / Legacy Tree Project

Cincinnati, OH, 1, June 2012 – The horticultural staff at Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum join other green industry professionals to alert tri-state residents that emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation in the region has reached the stage where death of ash trees not protected by insecticides is growing. Without immediate action, many ash trees not under treatment can be expected to die within 1 – 3 years.

From Executive Vice President, Thomas L. Smith:

“For the last 40 years, we’ve been proud of the path we have taken to decrease use of insecticides in our tree-care program. Doing so garnered us a reputation for the abundance and diversity of beneficial insects established on the grounds.

But today, in the face of one of the worst forest pests in recent years to escape eradication efforts, we are just as proud to say we’ve taken action to preserve many of the valuable ash trees in our collection with the initiation of targeted insecticide use. Changes in chemistry over the last 4 decades mean that not only are today’s insecticide options more selective than in the ‘70s, but some products used to control EAB are so safe you’ll find them in products approved for use around the home.

As recently as the spring of 2010, we recognized the need for EAB management. We had the good fortune to be selected for participation in a program called the Legacy Tree Project (LTP) which is providing 5 consecutive years of treatment with a product called Safari® for 76 ash trees in the Arboretum’s collection. During 2011, we found the first evidence of infestation in the Arboretum. The difference in appearance, between treated and untreated trees was evident.

Spurred by what we learned through the Legacy Tree Project, we made budget adjustments for 2012 and have initiated treatment on an additional 126 trees on the grounds.

Though the details aren’t clear yet, research suggests that after untreated ash trees have died, the need for treatment will diminish because EAB will run out of hosts. It is important to note, however, that Ash trees are susceptible to a number of other pests, diseases, and environmental conditions such as clearwing borers, ash yellows, and drought. There will still be loss of Ash trees from factors unrelated to EAB that treatment will not prevent.

We at Spring Grove are such passionate champions of trees and the environmental benefits they provide, we encourage all owners of ash trees in the tri-state to take action to conserve the urban canopy. Find out if you have ash trees in your yard. Call an ISA-certified arborist to help you develop a management plan – <http://www.treesaregood.org/faq/faq03.aspx>.

If tree conservation is the long term goal, structurally sound, healthy ash trees should be placed under treatment before the end of June. Don't delay – 2012 is a make or break year to avoid costly therapeutic treatment or outright losses. Compared to the cost of tree removal or replacement, the cost of conservation of existing trees is a bargain. Weak trees should be closely monitored and possibly removed before they die and become a hazard. Limbs begin to shed spontaneously within a year of tree death and high winds could knock over whole trees.

Looking to the future, excellent researchers across the nation will continue to find new ways to control this pest.”

Details About the LTP

The Legacy Tree Project (LTP) was initiated in 2010 by Valent Professional Products. Fourteen locations in the Midwest were selected as demonstration sites, providing opportunities for city officials and area residents to see first-hand that ash canopy conservation in the face of EAB is both economical and reliable.

Select trees at each site are receiving annual treatment from 2010 – 2014, using Valent's systemic insecticide, Safari®. Valent is underwriting the cost of both the product and application by The Davey Tree Expert Company, resulting in no cost to the local partners.

For more information about the Legacy Tree Project, visit www.legacytreeproject.com.

Information about Valent Professional Products and Safari® 20SG is available at www.valentpro.com/ .

ABOUT THE SPRING GROVE FAMILY OF COMPANIES – Established as a non-profit cemetery in 1845 and named a National Historic Landmark in 2007, Spring Grove Cemetery has been a trusted part of Cincinnati's rich tradition and history for over seven generations. The Gwen Mooney Funeral Homes, Spring Grove Chapel and Elden Good Chapel, are a wholly owned subsidiary of Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum. Oak Hill Cemetery in Glendale, also part of The Spring Grove Family, serves the Tri-County and surrounding communities. None of The Spring Grove Family of Companies are owned or controlled in any way by any national chain of cemeteries or funeral homes. For more than 165 years, Spring Grove has been committed to promoting education and advocacy about nature and the environment, helping individuals and families deal with grief, and educating families about the importance of pre-planning. The cemetery is located at 4521 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45232 in Spring Grove Village.