



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Process for Responding to Ash Tree Removal Requests within the Context of the Private Tree By-law

Date:	May 10, 2011
To:	Parks and Environment Committee
From:	Brenda Patterson, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2011\Cluster A\PFR\PE04-053111-AFS#13798

SUMMARY

This report provides information on how Urban Forestry will handle requests for removal of ash trees that may be infested with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) within the framework of the *City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, which is commonly referred to as the Private Tree By-law. This report outlines the existing by-law exemption provision which will be followed in order to simplify and expedite the process for enabling the timely removal of EAB infested ash trees from private property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation Recommends that:

1. This report be received for information.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting held on March 28, 2011, the Parks and Environment Committee considered the report entitled "Strategy for the Management of the Emerald Ash Borer" and requested, among other things, that "the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation report to the Parks and Environment Committee on options to help residents to identify the issues on the Emerald Ash Borer on private property within the tree bylaw."

Parks and Environment Committee Decision Document (Decision, Advice and Other Info. PE2.1, Recommendation 3)
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewPublishedReport.do?function=getDecisionDocumentReport&meetingId=4451>

City Council Decision Document PE2.1
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.PE2.1>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Based on the results of a recent study, the City of Toronto's urban forest is comprised of 10.2 million trees. Of the total tree population, 60% (6.1 million trees) are on private property and represent a significant contribution to the urban forest. The intent of the Private Tree By-law is to protect healthy, significant trees situated on private property from being damaged or cut-down unnecessarily and to ensure the on-going health and well-being of the City's urban forest. The by-law provides a standardized and equitable approach to protecting the urban forest while helping to increase awareness of the environmental, aesthetic and economic benefits of trees. In addition, the by-law directly supports the City's Official Plan, which recognizes the important contribution of trees to the quality of life in Toronto.

COMMENTS

The Private Tree By-law protects trees on private property that are 30 cm in diameter or larger at a height of 1.4 m above the ground. The by-law requires that a permit be obtained from the City prior to injuring or cutting and removing trees that meet the criteria for protection. Section 813-11 of the by-law provides certain exemptions to the requirement of a permit, those being for dead, diseased, or imminently hazardous trees.

Requests for Private Tree By-law Exemption to Remove Ash Trees Due to Emerald Ash Borer Infestation

All requests to remove privately-owned ash tree(s) that are 30 cm in diameter or larger due to EAB infestation, will be processed in accordance with the Private Tree By-law exemption provision in the following manner:

If the property owner or their agent indicates to staff that the ash tree(s) either exhibit symptoms which could be attributed to EAB infestation (see photo B) or exhibit obvious signs of EAB infestation (see photo C), the owner will be provided with a confirmation of by-law exemption (at no cost) and will be encouraged to replace the ash tree(s) with suitable tree species that will ultimately replace the canopy that will be lost.

The by-law exemption process outlined in this report allows Urban Forestry to track and monitor the EAB infestation and associated tree removals. It also enables us to provide timely and accurate information regarding tree removals occurring in a community, in response to public concerns or general enquiries.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Brenda Patterson
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photos of Ash Trees with symptoms of EAB

Attachment 1



Exhibits early symptoms



Exhibits obvious symptoms