

Protecting your home



European House Borer Fact Sheet

Background

EHB was discovered in Perth in 2004. Untreated pinewood has commonly been used in the State for structural roof framing since 2000. Accordingly, if EHB becomes established in Western Australia, other buildings and houses built with untreated structural pine, such as those in the newer suburbs of Perth, will stand a high risk of infestation.

EHB has been found mainly in the dead parts of live pine trees, and untreated pinewood materials. To date, there has been one discovery of EHB in the untreated pine timbers of a residential home, which was the result of nearby infested pine trees.

With increased awareness and more vigilance, further home infestation can be avoided, and EHB can be detected early to minimise damage.



This home has been built with untreated pine, and is at risk from EHB infestation. Recommended actions, including the use of treated pinewood, will reduce the risk of infestation and spread.

Act early



Relatively new homes located close to infested pine trees, such as Ellenbrook, are at a higher risk of infestation

The only way to truly protect your home is to prevent the spread of EHB to the properties of both yourself and others. This can be achieved through vigilance in the handling and movement of any untreated pinewood. It is important to start thinking about EHB now while population numbers in Western Australia are relatively small.

Once infestation has occurred, early discovery can provide home owners with the opportunity to control the pest before serious damage occurs. While EHB larvae can live inside a piece of timber for up to 12 years, research has shown that Western Australian conditions are contributing to a shorter life cycle of between 2 and 5 years.

If EHB is not found early, two or three generations may re-infest the same pieces of timber, causing significant structural damage and possibly even injury to occupants.

The following guidelines must be followed if the EHB threat is to be reduced and successfully managed:

- **Ensure any home built with untreated pinewood is regularly inspected by a EHB accredited pest controller.**
- **When building, use treated pine or other non-susceptible materials (as per Building Commission Advisory Notes 2009/002 and 2009/004). Contact the Building Commission on 1300 489 099 for more information.**
- **Avoid movement of untreated pinewood, particularly unwanted material such as off-cuts, tree branches, firewood and material from verge side collections.**
- **Dispose of any unwanted pinewood in your municipal green rubbish bin or refuse facility.**
- **Do not leave untreated pinewood waste materials exposed to the environment.**
- **Do not use pinewood waste materials that have not been properly stored or treated.**
- **Know what to look for. Further information can be found on the back of this fact sheet, and on the EHB website.**
- **Report any suspected infestations or sightings to the EHB hotline on 1800 084 881.**

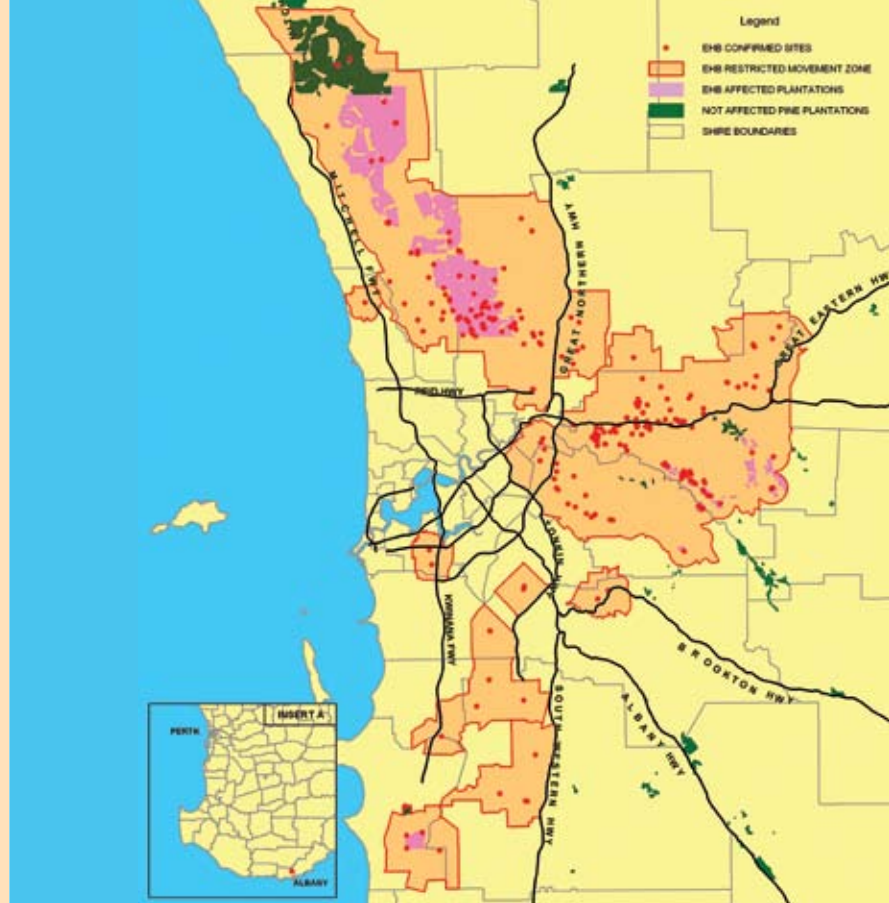
EHB response

Following the discovery of EHB in 2004, the Department of Agriculture and Food commenced a response program to undertake surveillance and monitoring of the pest, determine infestations and implement an eradication program.

The program was a partnership with the Forest Products Commission, and in 2007 became nationally funded by all States and the Federal Government. The eradication program transitioned to a containment program in 2010.

Initial surveillance found that infestation was restricted to the dead parts of pine trees, in the greater Perth metropolitan area. Populations were located mainly in the hills, Gngangara and southern metropolitan regions, with one find in Albany. Detailed maps of infestations can be found on the EHB website.

The move to containment will mean greater risk of EHB spreading to other areas. The public needs to act now to successfully contain and manage EHB spread, and avoid damage to buildings and homes.



Red dots show areas where EHB has been confirmed, as at August 2010

Look and listen

Adult EHB beetles create oval-shaped emergence holes in the timber, running in line with the grain of the wood. Dust and droppings may be seen on the floor below the timber where the adults have emerged.

EHB larvae tunnel through wood, packing tunnels or galleries with wood dust and droppings as they go. As they near the surface, narrow blisters along the grain of the wood may also be seen. Where there are exposed untreated pine beams or pine products, larvae may be heard chewing the timber.



FOR A LIST OF ACCREDITED PEST INSPECTORS refer to the Department of Commerce website:

http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/ConsumerProtection/Content/Real_Estate/EHB/index.htm

EHB damage



The EHB adult beetle lays its eggs in cracks, holes and joints in dead pine trees, dead parts of living trees, and untreated pine timber.

While adult beetles usually re-infest the same piece of wood, they have been known to fly short distances, or can be transported long distances through human assisted movement. In both cases, beetles will always search for new host material in which to lay eggs.

The damage is created by EHB larvae that hatch from the eggs. Because EHB can live in its larval state for 2-12 years without detection, significant boring and damage can occur. When EHB re-infests the same piece of timber, boring will continue until no viable wood remains. Structural collapse may then occur.

It is only when the adult beetle emerges through exit holes that infestation can be determined. Even the 1-2 mm exit hole can go unnoticed, although the danger of re-infestation over 2-3 generations (10-15 years) can be avoided through EHB vigilance, and regular pest control inspections of high risk houses.

For more information visit

www.ehb.wa.gov.au

Report any suspected EHB activity to the freecall hotline **1800 084 881**



Department of Agriculture and Food

