



MEDIA RELEASE

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UNTREATED PINE TO BE STORED AWAY FROM EHB BEETLES THIS SUMMER

With the onset of warmer weather, European House Borer (EHB) beetles have started emerging from affected untreated pine materials. The public are being urged to store any untreated pine in a way that will reduce the risk of EHB beetles depositing eggs into cracks of the timber where the resultant larvae cause serious damage to the untreated pine item.

EHB is a destructive pest of seasoned untreated pine that has recently been detected in parts of Greater Metropolitan Perth. The larvae can live in affected timber for two to six years in the Western Australian environment before changing into an adult beetle that emerges during the warmer months leaving a 5-10mm oval shaped exit hole, with the long axis of the hole running with the grain of the wood.

EHB Program Director Lisa Christy explained that "EHB beetles will seek out a mate and a suitable piece of untreated pine to lay their eggs into. To successfully contain this unwanted pest, people must safely store any wanted untreated pine and destroy any waste pine to reduce habitat for EHB.

"Placing any untreated pine items such as sawn timber, pallets and outdoor furniture inside an enclosed shed or wrapping the items in plastic until the end of summer will reduce the risk of EHB.

"To date EHB has not been detected in structural untreated pine timber. While the borer is mainly being found in dead pine trees, branches and logs we have a chance to try and solve something that has the potential to become a serious problem in the future" said Ms Christy.

The State Government's EHB Program has been working with residents and businesses in areas where EHB has been detected to treat or destroy any affected or high risk materials before the commencement of the flight season. Over 2000 tons of susceptible materials have so far been removed, including 750 pine trees. The EHB Program's efforts were recognised at the Timber Industry Awards in September with the program awarded "Excellence in Plantation Management."

Ms Christy said "People have so far been very supportive however we need the public's help to reduce the amount of suitable habitat that the beetles can easily access during flight season. It is important that waste untreated pine is taken to a rubbish tip for destruction and any untreated pine that has been stored outside in a known EHB affected area is not moved to another area.

"EHB has been detected relatively early in Western Australia and with the continued help of the public, we are hopeful of containing and eradicating this exotic timber pest."

The EHB Program is currently manning displays at shopping centers in areas where EHB has been found to inform people of the steps they can take to reduce the risk of EHB establishing in untreated pine on their property. This information will also be outlined in a newsletter that is being sent to all residents and businesses in areas where EHB has been detected.

To find out more on EHB, visit the website www.ehb.wa.gov.au or contact the Freecall Hotline on 1800 084 881. ENDS - Media Inquiries - Deanne Johnson 9366 2357