

8 May 2006

### Exotic pest found in structural timber

An exotic pest with the potential to cause widespread damage to the Australian economy has been found in structural timber.

The European House Borer (EHB) has been discovered in a wall beam in a house at Beechina in the Shire of Mundaring. It is the 30<sup>th</sup> Perth suburb to be affected by EHB, since it was first found in 2004.

Director of the EHB Response, Lisa Christy, said the latest find puts a new perspective on the work so far undertaken.

“While we think the timber in this instance was already infested before being installed into the house, it does highlight the problem house owners face, which is why new regulations to combat EHB were introduced by the government in February,” said Ms Christy.

The regulations control the movement of untreated pine in and out of designated areas, known as Priority Management Zones (PMZs). There are 59 PMZs throughout the Perth metropolitan area.

EHB, which attacks dead, untreated pine, was first discovered in Western Australia in a house in Parkerville in January 2004. Since then, the government has committed \$7.6 million to help control and eradicate the pest, which has the potential to cause \$6 billion damage to the national economy.

This work has included a survey of more than 52,000 households and businesses, as well as every street south of the 26<sup>th</sup> parallel in Western Australia being driven down twice, searching for potential infestations.

To date EHB has been found in 30 Perth suburbs, mostly in the Mundaring Hills and Gnangara/ Ellenbrook areas, and four pine plantations.

In the latest find, the house owner heard a scratching noise over several nights and eventually tracked the sound to a wall beam.

“I was already aware of the borer, because we are in an area that is affected by the regulations, so it was no surprise when I scraped the beam and found two larvae,” said the owner.

More information about European House Borer is available online at [www.ehb.wa.gov.au](http://www.ehb.wa.gov.au) or by calling the Freecall Hotline on 1800 084 881.

Ends

**Media Contact:** Christie van der Beeke T: 9366 2355 M: 0427 440 356