



MEDIA RELEASE

European House Borer buffer surveys begin in Wellard

Perth, 4 September 2007 - Wellard householders can expect a visit from Department of Agriculture and Food technical officers monitoring selected Perth suburbs for the presence of European House Borer (EHB).

Suburbs where EHB has been detected have been surveyed extensively, but this is the first time Wellard properties will be visited. The surveys follow the confirmation of EHB in a standing tree at a local property.

Teams of officers are surveying residents for any evidence of the borer and are also checking any dead pine trees and untreated pine items, including furniture, for EHB.

Where people are not home, technical officers leave an EHB fact sheet and a letter asking them to contact the EHB Response to complete a survey.

“All properties within a two kilometre radius of each at-risk area or affected site will be investigated as part of ongoing surveillance and containment activities,” said EHB Response Director John van Schagen.

“Any suspected EHB activity in dead pine trees, untreated pine timber or pine furniture or goods should be reported to the Freecall Hotline to arrange an expert examination,” he said.

The most obvious signs of EHB infestation are oval-shape emergence holes in the timber, running in line with the grain of the wood. Dust and droppings can sometimes be seen on the floor below the timber where an adult has emerged.

The borer tunnels through the wood, packing its tunnels or galleries with wood dust and droppings as it goes. As it nears the surface, narrow blisters along the grain of the wood may be seen.

Where there are exposed untreated pine beams or pine products, the borer may also be heard chewing the timber. However, thus far there has been no evidence of EHB in structural timber.

EHB was first identified in Perth in January 2004. Since then, EHB Response has inspected almost 60,000 Perth properties and 300,000 hectares of pine plantations for the pest. There are 120 infested sites in total, centred around two main clusters – the Mundaring Hills and the Gnangara/Ellenbrook area, including nine pine plantations. Plantation removal in affected areas adjacent to housing is planned.

The majority of infested urban sites have been completely cleaned up, with all possible host material removed. Pine trees, which have the potential to harbour EHB, are now also being removed, and thousands of tonnes of susceptible material have been destroyed.

More information about European House Borer is available online at www.ehb.wa.gov.au or by calling the Freecall Hotline on 1800 084 881.

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Contact the freecall hotline 1800 084 881 for further information 