



## **EUROPEAN HOUSE BORER COMMUNITY FORUM ANNOUNCED FOR ELLENBROOK**

Ellenbrook residents are invited to attend a community forum on Thursday, July 9 to discuss local pine tree removal to combat the imminent threat of the serious pest European House Borer (EHB).

The forum, to be held at 7pm at the Ellenbrook Community Resource Centre will provide information about the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA) EHB Response, and the need for a unified and collaborative approach with both residents and other stakeholders.

Representatives from DAFWA, the Forest Products Commission, the Department of Environment and Conservation, and the Department of Housing and Works are scheduled to talk and take questions from community members.

EHB director John van Schagen said four EHB infestations had been found in the Ellenbrook area, as well as extensive infestations in the nearby Gnangara pine plantation.

Mr van Schagen said EHB was mainly found in dead pine or dead parts of live pine trees, but the pest could also infest untreated pine timber in houses.

“This means that all live pine trees and waste material in the Priority Management Zones (PMZ) established around each infestation must be removed,” he said.

“Without removal EHB will eventually infest local homes and businesses, which could lead to structural collapse, large scale treatment and replacement costs as well as threaten the future of the WA softwood timber industry.”

Mr van Schagen said the forum would provide an opportunity for Ellenbrook residents to become familiar with signs of possible EHB infestation, such as oval shaped exit holes, powdery wood dust and soft scraping sounds.

“It is important local residents understand the very real threat EHB poses in WA and to Australia if not eventually eradicated from this State,” Mr van Schagen said.

“Eradication of EHB is a feasible option, so long as pine trees in plantation buffer zones and infested residential areas are removed as a matter of urgency.

“The recent discovery of EHB in a house in nearby Brigadoon has confirmed this urgency.”

The EHB Response Plan goal is to have all pine trees from PMZs in WA residential areas removed by 2012 and verification of eradication completed by 2021.

Mr van Schagen said the EHB Response was part of a nationally coordinated program to protect Australian homes and businesses.

“We want to avoid the experience in South Africa where about 90 per cent of houses next to a pine plantation became infested with EHB, which lead to large scale collapse of buildings within 20 years,” he said.

Concerned residents should have regular inspections of their homes by a timber pest inspector licensed to check for EHB. Contact details are available from the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection’s offices or visit: [www.docep.wa.gov.au/ConsumerProtection/EHB/index.html](http://www.docep.wa.gov.au/ConsumerProtection/EHB/index.html).

Anyone wishing to attend the public forum is being asked to RSVP to Janelle Easthope at the City of Swan on 9297 9612.

For more information about EHB call the freecall hotline on 1800 084 881 or visit [www.ehb.wa.gov.au](http://www.ehb.wa.gov.au).

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