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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2015, 2:00 p.m.

Emerald Ash Borer Confirmed in Cedar Rapids

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA – October 19, 2015 – Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been positively identified in Linn County at the IDOT rest area along I-380, approximately ½ mile north of the Johnson County line. The site is within the City of Cedar Rapids limits. City staff will coordinate with IDOT staff for the removal of trees at this site.

The EAB is an exotic beetle whose larvae embeds and destroys the inner bark of ash trees. Since the beetle's arrival in the U.S in 2002, the City of Cedar Rapids has implemented a multi-year plan to prepare for a potential EAB infestation. The City has already removed approximately 2,000 declining public ash trees. The City stopped planting ash trees in 2005 in an effort to reduce the population and the impacts of an infestation, and has worked on replanting a more diverse stock of trees. These actions taken in advance will mean fewer trees to remove or replace, and reduce the impacts felt by an infestation. In addition, the City will chemically treat 1,200-1,900 of the best-quality ash trees on City property in an effort to save them.

Residents are responsible for ash trees on their personal property. They have the option of treating infested ash trees, but it requires continual treatment for the life of the tree, and may not guarantee a tree's survival. Trees with storm damage or other safety concerns will need to be removed, regardless of treatment. Information on treatment options can be found on the City's website: www.cityofcr.com.

The public can help limit the spread of EAB by using and purchasing local firewood only, as a key factor in the spread of the beetle is human activity.

Ash is one of the most abundant native tree species in North America. According to the USDA Forest Service, Iowa has an estimated 52 million rural ash trees and approximately 3.1 million more ash trees in urban areas. Cedar Rapids has approximately 10,000 public ash trees.

For more information on Emerald Ash Borer:

- The Emerald Ash Borer Information website is: <http://www.emeraldAshborer.info>
- The Department of Natural Resources:
<http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/Forestry/ForestHealth/EmeraldAshBorer.aspx>
- The Iowa State University Extension Service website is:
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pme/EmeraldAshBorer.html>