

# WH

**Wright-Hennepin**

Cooperative Electric Association

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# Hotline Update

News for Wright-Hennepin members

May 2017



More than 2,400 members families and guests attended Wright-Hennepin's 80th Annual Meeting on April 20.

## Wright-Hennepin Celebrates 80 Years

Wright-Hennepin's (WH) headquarters teemed with more than 2,400 members and guests in attendance for the cooperative's 80th Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 20.

Director elections resulted in the re-election of Duane "Butch" Lindenfelser, Albertville, Minn., District 2; Chris Lantto, Annandale, Minn., District 5; and Kenneth Hiebel, Plymouth, Minn., District 7.

Board officers Erick Heinz, Timothy Young

and Dale Jans were all re-elected as board chair, vice chair and secretary/treasurer, respectively.

Chairman Heinz noted that the cooperative continues to rank among the top utilities in the nation for supplying reliable, competitively-priced power.

"Our distribution costs are lower than the vast majority of cooperatives in the state and nation and they are lower than most systems our size," Heinz said. "One benefit of our cost control efforts is that the average WH member pays 2.4 percent less than an Xcel Energy customer," and approximately 12 percent less if they are on an Energy-Saving program.

"There are more than 525,000 minutes in a year and, on average, WH members were out of power just 44 of them," in 2016 Heinz said.

Chief Financial Officer Angie Pribyl outlined WH's strong 2016 financial performance.

"More than \$44 million in capital credits has been returned to you since 1957," Pribyl informed. "In fact, in 2016, WH returned \$3.1 million of capital credits to you. The average



Members re-elected incumbent directors Chris Lantto, District 5, Annandale (left); Duane "Butch" Lindenfelser, District 2, Monticello (center); and Kenneth Hiebel, District 7, Plymouth.

member received a \$60 check in the mail right before the holidays."

Wright-Hennepin Holding Company (WH Holding) Chair Timothy Young highlighted WH subsidiaries' contributions to local students in the form of scholarships. Since 1988, WH has awarded more than 500 scholarships totaling more than \$657,000, with WH Holding contributing \$75,000.

### In this issue...

- 2 A message from the CEO
- 3 WH Directors congratulate Wright County Dairy Princesses
- 4 Lineman Appreciation Day
- 5 Tree and nightlight donations
- 6 How WH Security benefits WH
- 7 Wind and solar winners
- 8 Emerald Ash Borer seminar

Continued on page 3



# CEO's Memo

*Tim Sullivan, WH President and CEO*

## Summer tree trimming means safe, reliable power

It's often said that, for most of us, electricity is top of mind on just three occasions: when the bill arrives, when the lights go out, and when our favorite tree next to a power line is trimmed!

This is understandable given how reliable and universal electric service has become and the pride we Minnesotans take in our homes and yards. But like so many other things, reliable power isn't automatic. A modern, dependable electric grid requires ongoing investments in planning, technology, and maintenance.

So, as we head into the summer growing season, I want to share with you Wright-Hennepin's (WH's) approach to tree trimming and vegetation management and why it's so important.

### Safety and reliability

We're blessed to live in a beautiful part of the world, rich with a wide variety of eastern hardwood trees, rolling terrain and green spaces. From the utility perspective, the challenge is to make sure these beautiful features don't interfere with our lines and your service.

Tree branches which overhang or immediately about a utility line can easily fall onto an energized wire during high winds or a summer thunderstorm. This not only knocks out your power but can present you and your neighbors with a very serious safety hazard.

Consequently, WH executes a comprehensive vegetation management plan. Every year, we target the bulk of our tree trimming to one of five map sections. We rotate our activity annually due to the sheer scale of our service territory, the vast number of trees, and the need to keep operating costs down.

### Tree trimming

WH trims members' trees to ensure clearance of 15 feet from the primary distribution pole lines. Why 15 feet? One reason is that line crews need space and room in which to work, especially at night or in bad weather. This helps ensure the safety of our crews so they go home

healthy to their families. Another is that, given our rotation schedule, it will likely be five years before WH can return to trim again, so we need to plan for five years of future growth.

### Ground brush

WH typically spot-sprays bushes and ground brush or will sometimes use trimmers and mowers to keep space beneath poles and wires clear. We do this not only to protect lines but to ensure easier access and room for equipment if repairs are required.

### Notifying members

We recognize that trees add beauty, shade and value to homes and businesses. Consequently, we strive to show respect before, during and after clearing efforts. We start by sending a notification letter to those in our active map areas. We share the scope of our work and include a postcard for you to share special requests and concerns. Our contracted tree foreman will also attempt to meet personally with you about the job before work begins or leave a door-hanger with contact information. If we find that tree trimming is beyond the initial project scope or that full tree removal is required, WH will make every attempt to contact you before the work is done.

Please, let us know what you think of our trimmers by participating in surveys we are currently conducting.

Remember too that WH can trim trees separate from required line clearance jobs! So, check our website for more information.

### Our contractors

Because of the seasonal nature of the work, WH routinely utilizes contractors for vegetation management. Please know we exercise great care in choosing contractors and select only qualified, reputable partners. When working in your neighborhood, they will identify themselves as WH contractors. We also regularly follow up to ensure they've met expectations.

**Continued on page 5**

## Board Report

### February Board Meeting Highlights:

The Wright-Hennepin and WH Holding monthly Board of Director meetings were conducted February 16, 2017. A quorum of directors was present. Items discussed and/or Board action taken:

- Approved allocating 2016 margins to the membership for future capital credit retirements.
- Approved notice of annual meeting, draft agenda and director ballots.
- Approved proposed pork chop request for proposal letter and mailing list for the upcoming annual meeting meal.
- Approved Permanent Substitute Fixed Resource Wind and Temporary Substitute Fixed Resource – Stanton Station Resolutions with one of WH's power suppliers.
- Approved continued distribution of tree seedlings to Lake Maria and Collinwood State Park events and distribution of tree seedlings to third grades and night lights to kindergarten classes at area schools.
- Approved financing Community Solar 4 facilities.
- Approved updated Chain of Command and Expense Review Committee policies.
- Heard year-end reports and reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, Legal, financial, and operations reports.
- Directors reported on industry meetings they attended on behalf of the cooperative.
- Conducted CEO's 2016 performance review.

### March Board Meeting Highlights:

The Wright-Hennepin and WH Holding monthly Board of Director meetings were conducted March 14, 2017. A quorum of directors was present. Items discussed and/or Board action taken:

- Accepted auditor's report on an unqualified ("clean") opinion for fiscal year 2016 and was

**Continued on page 7**

## ● WH Directors congratulate Wright County Dairy Princesses

On Saturday, March 18, the Wright-Hennepin Board of Directors recognized Wright County Dairy Princesses at a ceremony held in Howard Lake. Dairy royalty were presented with a necklace as a congratulatory gift for their selection. Recipients attended the event with their families.



*Pictured are the Wright County Dairy Princesses with WH Directors, from left to right: Shelly Campbell, Board Secretary/Treasurer Dale Jans, Maggie Socha, Director Burton Horsch, Bethany Kozitka, and Director Chris Lantto.*

## Wright-Hennepin Celebrates 80 years

Continued from Page 1



*Savannah (left) and Lily Oathout, of Rockford, take a break from all the action and pose for a picture during WH's 80th Annual Meeting.*

Wendy Youngren, WH Holding chief operating officer, detailed the additional services and products available to members through the cooperative's subsidiaries.

"If you are looking to have your yard spruced up with tree trimming, call WH! If you want additional protection for your property or your loved ones, call WH! If your appliance warranty is out of date and you're facing unknown repair bills on aging appliances, call WH! And if you are remodeling or finishing your basement and are interested in an energy efficient heating option for warm floors — look to your cooperative!"

Youngren said. "Your cooperative is not only ready to continue to deliver the electricity necessary to power your world, we provide additional benefits that provide you with peace of mind and protect your pocket book!"

WH President and CEO Tim Sullivan took members on a journey from the WH's inception in 1937 up until today, highlighting how the cooperative has striven to put members first amid eight decades of changes and challenges.

"We're proudest of the fact that, for 80 years, WH has delivered the quality of life you need, want, and expect — the quality of life that makes everything from entertainment to work to the realization of personal dreams possible," Sullivan said. "In 1937, WH was formed with just 1,400 members — and fewer than 400 of them were connected initially. Today, it is the state's fourth largest electric co-op, serving more than 51,000 consumers. And we've gone from generating revenues of \$11,000 in 1937 to almost \$100 million today.

"... Best of all, we've stayed true to our roots, to our identity, to who we are. And we proudly are a member-owned electric utility run for the benefit of those we serve. So, while we celebrate our founding 80 years ago, we also recommit ourselves to the daily task of honoring and demonstrating the Cooperative Difference. If we continue to do that, we'll have a proud and distinguished legacy for another 80 years and beyond."

## ● Heinz and Lantto earn Director Gold Certification

Wright-Hennepin Board Chair Erick Heinz and fellow director Chris Lantto earned Director Gold Certificates from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) in March.

The Director Gold Certificate demonstrates to co-op members a directors' ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability. In order to attain Director Gold status, Heinz and Lantto had to first earn NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate and Board Leadership Certificate (BLC), as well as three additional credits from the BLC course list.



*Board Chair Erick Heinz (left) and Director Chris Lantto with their Director Gold Certificates from NRECA.*



*Carl Greku (left), of Cokato, won the grand prize — a 2011 Chevy extended cab pickup truck. WH Security Business Manager Steve Walstad is pictured presenting Greku with the keys to his new vehicle.*

WH members enjoyed a free pork chop dinner in addition to the business meeting. The event also included bingo and children's activities. Numerous prizes were awarded throughout the evening, including a 2011 Chevy pickup, which was awarded to Carl Greku. To see the full list of prize winners, visit: <https://goo.gl/62TmCc>.

## Co-op Connections featured “Deal of the month”:

25 percent off prescription glasses, sunglasses or non-prescription sunglasses at North Star Eye Care located at 13334 Bass Lake Road N., Maple Grove, MN 55311.

Offer valid when showing your FREE Co-op Connections card to the cashier. Another benefit of being a WH member! Lost your card? No problem. For a free replacement or to sign up your business, call (763) 477-3000. For more deals visit: <http://www.connections.coop>, or use the Co-op Connections app on your mobile device to find all your local deals and more!



These linemen work to make sure every WH member has power. Front row, pictured from left to right: Karl Nordberg, Scott Gearey, Jon Lee, Reid Nelson, Tony Ross, Sheldon Moe, Dan Morris, Vince Hofford, John Stueven, Gary Ross, Matt Bogart, Dave Mundahl, Keith Burandt, Jim Sundell, Steve Schallock, Lars Erickson,

Jim Rohlin, Jake Wurm, Charlie Malacek, Dale Walcheski, Tony Jude, Ryan Daniels, Rich Horman and Ben Sillerud. Back row, from left to right: Mitch Zehringer, Mike Kronquist and Brett Hack. Not pictured, Steve Logeais and Troy Driscoll.

## Recognizing our crew for Lineman Appreciation Day

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has designated the second Monday in April as National Lineman Appreciation Day. Pictured above is Wright-Hennepin’s line crew, who keep the lights on for more than 50,000 members.

They patrol and service 681 square miles that include most of rural Wright and western Hennepin counties, plus small sections of Carver, McLeod, Sherburne and Stearns counties.

Combined, these men have 443 years of experience patrolling WH’s lines — 2,085 of which are underground, with 1,862 overhead.

We appreciate the work they do, and thank them for working so hard on behalf of our members!



### Receive a \$5 bill credit!

WH is offering a one-time, \$5 bill credit if you sign up for all of the following three items:

- EZ Pay (automatic payments from checking, debit or credit card)
- E billing (bill amount is delivered via email each month)
- Paperless (no paper bill - your bill amount will be delivered via email only)

Call today to sign up! (763) 477-3000 or (800) 943-2667. One \$5 bill credit per member






## ● WH donates trees and night lights to local schools

Wright-Hennepin (WH) donated more than 3,300 LED night lights to kindergarteners and 3,500 tree seedlings to third graders throughout the service territory for its Plant-A-Tree program.

Since 1997, WH has donated tree seedlings to local schools through the Plant-A-Tree program to help replenish the wooded areas of our service territory. Now in the 20th year

of donations, WH also donated LED night lights to kindergarteners.

Tree seedling types included: red maple, bur oak, pin oak, blue spruce and Norway spruce. WH also reserves some of the seedlings for planting during its annual cleanup day at Lake Maria State Park with help from local Boy and Girl Scouts.



*Third graders and kindergarteners from Delano Elementary proudly display their trees and LED night lights donated by Wright-Hennepin just before Earth Day.*

## ● Lake Maria State Park gets some TLC from volunteers

Wright-Hennepin (WH) employees, alongside local Girl and Boy Scouts and other volunteers, took to the woods of Lake Maria State Park for an annual spring cleanup day on April 29.

Volunteers cleaned common areas, raked leaves and planted trees and wild flowers on

a beautiful April day. WH provided everyone with a free lunch, and helpers received a free pass to explore the park for their work.

The event marks the 17th straight year WH has co-sponsored the cleanup with Lake Maria State Park.



*Approximately 35 volunteers joined Wright-Hennepin and rangers from Lake Maria State Park for the annual spring cleanup day at the Monticello park. They planted 500 tree seedlings, cleaned common areas, raked leaves and much more on Saturday, April 29.*

## ● Tips for National Electrical Safety Month

May has been recognized as National Electrical Safety Month by Electrical Safety Foundation International. Each year, there are about 31,000 fires and 200 deaths involving home electrical systems, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. While electricity is essential to everyday life, it oftentimes is not at the forefront of our minds until there is an outage. Now is a good time to remember that electricity must be handled with care, and to go over some safe electrical practices.

- Inspect your property and take note of power line locations and keep at least 10 feet away from them.
- Use extension cords only when necessary and only on a temporary basis.
- If you see a downed power line, immediately notify the authorities or Wright-Hennepin.
- Schedule an electrical inspection if your home is more than 40 years old.
- Inspect appliances and power tools for damaged cords or broken plugs.
- Use ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection when working with electricity near water.

## Summer tree trimming means safe, reliable power

**Continued from Page 2**

### Let WH help

So, if WH crews or contractors aren't in your neighborhood this summer, we'll be there sometime in the next five years. Having said that, if a tree is growing into a power line near your home or business, please don't try to trim it yourself! This can be dangerous, even life-threatening. Instead, call Wright-Hennepin. We will schedule a visit and our professionally trained crews will trim the tree efficiently, keeping the line reliable and safe for you and your family.

Remember: summer is tree trimming and vegetation management season. As always, our priority is to provide you with safe, reliable and affordable service—so the next time electricity is top-of-mind is when you open your monthly bill! As always, thanks for your membership and your business.

# ● How WH Security benefits you and your cooperative

You probably already know of Wright-Hennepin's (WH) subsidiary, WH Security. But did you know all the ways that WH Security benefits you and your cooperative?

WH Security is the first business WH created to provide its members enhanced benefits back in 1989. Since then, WH Security has provided custom security system installation and alarm monitoring to thousands of local homes and businesses at a competitive price.

But did you know that WH Security also provides rate relief for your cooperative? That money is used to help pay for our headquarters and staff—including billing, technical support, and other needed services. And the benefits don't stop there—WH Security offers discounted monitoring prices for WH members! WH Security also offers free in-home assessments that are obligation free.

By choosing WH Security to meet your home



*When you do business with WH Security, you're doing more than just supporting a local security company. You're lowering electric rates for you and your fellow members. Pictured is Steve Brandt, a WH Security technician.*

protection needs, you're supporting a local business that's been providing quality security services for 28 years.

If you're a WH member who's in the market for a security system, look to your cooperative! Call (763) 477-3664, or visit [wh-security.com](http://wh-security.com) for more information.



One easy call gets your utility lines marked and helps protect you from injury and expense.

**Safe Digging Is No Accident: Always Call 811 Before You Dig**

Visit [call811.com](http://call811.com) for more information.



## WH Appliance Repair

### Hung Out to Dry?



Get **MORE** appliance coverage for **LESS** than the other guys.

With WH Appliance Repair your major appliances are covered for only **\$17.99 per month**. Parts and labor covered:

- ✓ Refrigerator
- ✓ Clothes Dryer
- ✓ Heating System
- ✓ Range
- ✓ Water Heater

Additional appliance coverage is available

**Sign up today and receive your first two months FREE!**

Learn more by calling (763) 477-3000 or visit [www.whe.org](http://www.whe.org) and choose "Services and Products"



## tenKsolar Winner

**JOHN NEURURER** of Maple Grove wins a credit for 111 kWh, January's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.

**HARVEY PETERSON** of Cokato wins a credit for 212 kWh, February's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.

**JESSICA KOSTER** of Plymouth wins a credit for 224 kWh, March's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.



## Solar Winner

**VICKI HOIEN** of South Haven wins a credit for 142 kWh, January's output from WH's solar panels.

**DAVE VANDENEINDE** of Maple Plain wins a credit for 234 kWh, February's output from WH's solar panels.

**DAVID ANDERSON** of Albertville wins a credit for 236 kWh, March's output from WH's solar panels.



## Wind Winner

**WAYNE BECKER** of Elk River wins a credit of 557 kWh, January's output from WH's wind generator.

**DANIEL ROSSOW** of Maple Grove wins a credit for 937 kWh, February's output from WH's wind generator.

**GENE OLCHEFSKE** of Plymouth wins a credit for 700 kWh, March's output from WH's wind generator.

### Average monthly energy output over 12 months:

Wind generator: 788 kWh

Solar panels: 221 kWh

tenKsolar system: 204 kWh

*To enter the monthly contest to win the output from WH's wind generator or solar panels, go to: <http://goo.gl/QjyTM>.*

## Non-discrimination statement

Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association in accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association is an equal opportunity provider.

## Board Report

### Continued from Page 2

congratulated by the firm of Brady Martz on the cooperative's strong internal controls and overall financial condition.

- Selected directors to attend the Wright County Dairy Princess program.
- Selected directors to attend local school award events.
- Approved Cooperative Network's dues.
- Presented an award to Chair Heinz and Director Lantto for earning their NRECA Director Gold Credential.
- Heard report on WH's AMI Pilot Project and a Micro Grid Update.
- Heard report on WH's study of controls and thermostat energy management.
- Reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, Legal, financial, and operations reports.
- Directors reported on industry meetings they attended on behalf of the cooperative.

## SHAPE UP YOUR YARD FOR SUMMER!

### TREE TRIMMING FROM WH SERVICES

Keep your landscape looking beautiful with professional tree care. Schedule your service today!

#### SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Pruning and shaping
- Tree and stump removal
- Lot clearing for construction
- Emerald ash borer treatment
- Aerial bucket tree work
- Tree fertilization
- Storm damage clearing

**90-DAY**  
no-interest  
financing available!

**WH SERVICES**  
(763) 477-3000 [www.whe.org](http://www.whe.org)

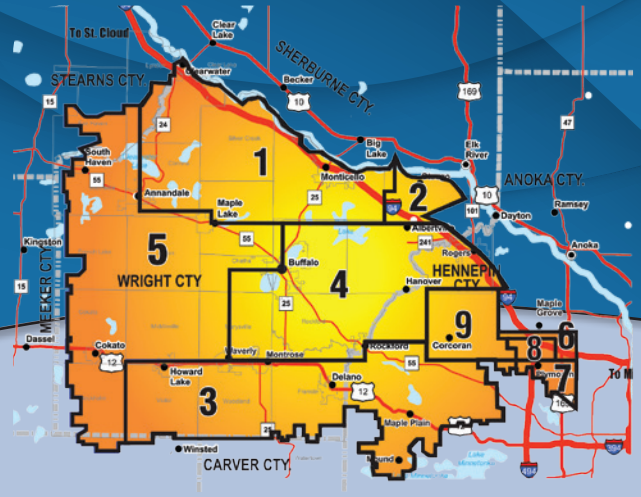
## Board of Directors:

- District 1: Timothy Young, Annandale  
District 2: Duane "Butch" Lindenfesler, Monticello  
District 3: Burton Horsch, Howard Lake  
District 4: Dale Jans, Buffalo  
District 5: Chris Lantto, Annandale  
District 6: Mike Tieva, Maple Grove  
District 7: Kenneth Hiebel, Plymouth  
District 8: Casey Whelan, Maple Grove  
District 9: Erick Heinz, Corcoran

**WH President and CEO: Tim Sullivan**

**WH CFO: Angie Pribyl**

**WH Holding COO: Wendy Youngren**



# Hotline Update

May News for Wright-Hennepin members

Periodicals



6800 Electric Drive  
Rockford, MN 55373

Mailing information goes here  
6800 Electric Drive  
Rockford, MN 55373

## Keep in touch with your cooperative!

### Member call center hours (all year):

7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday – Friday  
(763) 477-3000 or (800) 943-2667

### Office hours:

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday  
(Labor Day – Memorial Day)

7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday  
(Memorial day – Labor day)

### To report an outage:

Electric dispatchers are available 24/7

**Call:** (763) 477-3100 or (888) 399-1845

### WH Security monitoring:

Security dispatchers are available 24/7

**Call:** (763) 477-4275 or (800) 858-7811

**Website:** www.whe.org

**Email:** info@whe.org

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/  
WrightHennepin

**Twitter:** @WrightHennepin

**REMINDER: Our hours will change to 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Memorial Day through Labor Day**

**WH is closed Monday, May 29 in observance of Memorial Day.**

## New water heating rebate available

Wright-Hennepin (WH) is pleased to inform members that there's a new water heating program and rebate of which they can take advantage.

The Metered Water Storage program offers a reduced energy rate of \$0.06 per kWh, and is not subject to the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA). WH also has two rebates available for qualifying water heaters that can save members up to \$500!

WH also has another program available if you're looking for greater up-front savings toward the purchase/installation of a water heater. Members can enroll in WH's Quick Cash Water Heating program that offers up to \$1,050 worth of savings! This program is metered at the general service rate.

Details and rebate forms for each program can be found at <https://goo.gl/8NFPQE>. Rebates are for new installations only. Call (763) 477-3000 for more information.



## Emerald Ash Borer Seminar

**Tuesday, June 13, 2017**

**Two Sessions 4:00-5:00 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.**

6800 Electric Drive, Rockford

**Register by calling: (763) 477-3000**

Hosted by Wright-Hennepin with a presentation by Jeff Palmer, an ISA certified arborist, and Ken Berres from Bear Tree Care.



Learn how to identify an ash tree that may have an Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation. Get updates on what municipalities and residents are doing to manage this nuisance. Find out the costs of protecting your trees.