

BEETLE BULLETIN #4

Fall is the Perfect Time to Fight Bark Beetles!

The Mountain Pine Beetles begin their “fiscal year” in mid to late summer, when the new brood flies from each infested tree to infest three to ten new trees. Because the next generation of MPBs will not mature until 2010, we have time to find, cut and treat these newly infected trees and to curtail the spread of the beetle epidemic. Cutting trees in the fall (after the beetle flights are over) does not carry the risk of attracting new beetles to your property. See Inside for more information.



John Taylor, BeetleBuster Coordinator for Boulder Heights, examines fresh beetle hits in our Fire District

Come to the BeetleBuster Training Seminar

Saturday, September 19, 9 to 1
Station One, 1905 Linden Drive

Snacks provided. You'll learn the whole fascinating story of the nefarious habits of the bark beetles and how to interrupt their horrifying progression. There is no requirement that you become a BeetleBuster, but it won't be discouraged!

Reserve a place at beetlebusters@gmail.com
or call Suzanne Adams at 303.449.0997.



Photo by Bruce Baumgartel

Signs of Beetles: Pitch Tubes on the bark.



Photo by Jim Adams

What Should We Do Right Now?

1. Find the newly infested trees. Identify the hit trees by the popcorn-looking pitch tubes on the bark, plus frass, or boring dust, on the bark and around the base of the tree. Pitch tubes are the tree's attempt to use its resin, or pitch, to expel the beetles. Sometimes you'll see the beetle stuck in the pitch tube. The tree won't fight!
2. Flag the "hit" trees and plan to have them cut after September 30. By that time the beetles should have completed their flights and we shouldn't see any new hits. (But the beetles don't always read the bulletins. Weather can affect flight times.)
3. Cut **and treat** the infested trees. Cutting alone won't kill the beetles or their offspring. It's essential to remove the beetles' habitat. But HOW?



CHIP, STRIP, or SHIP!

CHIP: Our BMFPD Mitigation Services recently purchased a new chipper. The Mit Crew is often busy with grant-funded fuel breaks, but when they are available they can cut trees and chip the slash according to Colorado State Forest Service standards. This is an effective means of getting rid of beetles in the late fall and winter. Contact them at 303.440.0235.



For recommendations of other contractors write to Colorado State Forest Service or to beetlebusters@gmail.com for a copy of "Who Can Do the Work?"



Photo by Jim Adams

BeetleBuster Russ Endo strips bark from infested tree. This can also be done with a chainsaw attachment called a Log Wizard.

STRIP: Removing the bark from the infested tree will kill the larvae. The BeetleBusters can demonstrate the technique or refer you to contractors who can do it.

SHIP: Move the infested material and slash out of the fire district. Boulder County and City of Boulder Wood Waste Drop-Off Center at 5880 Butte Mill Road in Boulder (the Western Disposal Transfer Station) accepts wood waste at 40% the cost of standard trash disposal rates (\$29 a ton).



Photo by Jim Adams

Steven Janes, (303.859.2863), trucks slash and logs to a facility in Erie where they are burned: Endsville for those beetles!

Take Preventative Action

Consider spraying your “pet” trees next spring. Spraying is very effective if done by a competent professional tree service. You may get a better rate by joining with neighbors.



Photo by Jim Adams

Freshly cut logs attracted beetles to nearby trees. BeetleBuster Suzanne Adams removes some bark to identify the beetles.

Watch for future bulletins with information about Verbenone, an important new weapon in the Beetle Battle.

WARNING: Don't pick up logs from thinning projects along roadsides. Bark beetles may hitchhike to your neighborhood.

For help, call the BeetleBusters! We're free, and we're happy to inspect your property for you, mark your trees, identify the kind of beetle you are dealing with (there are four problem beetles in our area), and help you find someone who can do the work for you. Write to beetlebusters@gmail.com to request an inspection.



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WHY DOES THE FIRE DEPARTMENT CARE ABOUT BEETLES?

“Fires are more likely to occur in forests with large-scale Mountain Pine Beetle kill. Large, intense fires that produce extreme fire behavior are again possible... Protecting communities and other values at risk is imperative.”

Colorado State Forest Service, 2009; Merrill Kaufmann et al, "Lodgepole Pine Management Guidelines for Land Managers in the Wildland-Urban Interface."

Beetle mitigation is fire mitigation.



Fire in beetle killed forest threatens Grand County YMCA, 2007 (Photo by Paul Minter)