

NEWS STORY **Town of Richmond Hill**
 Waste Management

“Partners in Project Green organized a roundtable discussion between GTA municipalities to share individual emerald ash borer mitigation plans and discuss waste wood disposal methods.”



GTA Municipalities Collaborate to Find Solutions for Infected Trees

Every year in the Greater Toronto Area, well over 100,000 ash trees are infected by the emerald ash borer (EAB) and need to be disposed. The EAB is a green beetle native to Asia and Eastern Russia. This presents many challenges for residents, businesses, and the municipalities who have to contend with the disposal of tens of thousands of trees cut down from public streets and parks.

In November, Partners in Project Green organized a roundtable discussion between seven GTA municipalities to share individual EAB mitigation plans, discuss waste wood disposal challenges and identify collaboration opportunities towards better solutions. Representatives from the Urban Forestry departments in the following organizations attended:

- Town of Richmond Hill
- Town of Caledon
- City of Toronto
- City of Mississauga
- City of Brampton
- Region of Peel
- Toronto and Region Conservation

The in-depth discussion brought attention to major roadblocks, specifically the lack of an economically and logistically feasible solution that can address expected massive volumes. As a result, each municipality is currently working with their regional government to process their wood into mulch, firewood or compost for use and sell in their local parks.



Coincidentally on the same day, Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests (LEAF) and the City of Toronto’s Economic Development & Culture office held a similar roundtable between supply and demand industry stakeholders to design an industry roadmap for urban wood utilization. A dialogue was facilitated between stakeholders to identify industry opportunities and roadblocks, and stimulate new thinking on how to address challenges and advance the market.