

What you should do if you suspect that you have found an invasive insect or disease:

- 1) Record very carefully the location of your find, including the specific tree, the property owner, the address or location of the property and the town. Also, record the date and time of day of the find, and who was there when the insect or disease was witnessed. Please, write all of this down!
- 2) If it is an insect, do not collect the insect unless you are absolutely sure that you can prevent its escape. It is much better to let the inspectors come out to the site to make the identification rather than to risk spreading the infestation to a new site. Only collect the insect if you can place it in a tightly sealed, glass jar with a metal lid or other container that the insect cannot chew its way out of. Alternatively, you may kill the insect by freezing it for at least two days or by immersing it in alcohol. If you cannot guarantee that the insect will not escape, do not collect it – it is simply too risky!
- 3) Along those same lines, do not bring wood samples in for identification, regardless of whether it is an insect or disease that you suspect. Firewood removals and other type of wood transport have been among the primary means for spread of these insects and diseases. Instead, store the wood securely on site so that investigators may examine them later for signs of the insect or disease in question.
- 4) If the job has generated large pieces of wood that you had intended to chip, postpone chipping the wood until inspectors have had a chance to positively identify the insect or disease. Keep it on site and keep it reasonably intact. Inspectors from The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station should be able to make this identification within days of notification, so this should not be a lengthy inconvenience. Being cautious greatly increases the likelihood that serious harm can be avoided. Feel free to communicate your sense of urgency to the Agricultural Experiment Station.
- 5) Be aware, as well, of other ways that the insect or disease might use you to travel from the site – such as by hitching a ride on your truck or being carried out on saws or other equipment. Pay close attention to general tree care sanitation!
- 6) Please, do take pictures, make notes and collect any other observations that might help with the identification of the insect or disease.
- 7) Call The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station as soon as reasonably possible. Ask to speak with Dr. Victoria Smith (1-203-974-8474) or send inquires and digital photographs to CAES.StateEntomologist@ct.gov. We will be able to help you and will provide further direction.
- 8) Please try not to spread the word on this situation unnecessarily. This is sensitive information that can have serious consequences in a variety of areas (involving regulatory issues, matters of quarantine, and so on). As a result, it is best to be quiet about the possible infestation and not discuss it with people outside of the situation, at least until you have had a chance to speak with the staff at the Experiment Station. If the insect or disease is, indeed, one of the invasive pests, the Experiment Station will confirm the identification of the insect or disease, and formulate a response plan.

Your assistance in helping to prevent the further spread of an invasive insect or disease is greatly appreciated by all who value our trees and forests, and is of the utmost importance.