

Emerald Ash Borer Grant FAQ

This FAQ will be updated as needed. This FAQ is divided into three sections:

1. Questions and answers are applicable to both grants.
2. Questions and answers apply to Illinois Urban Forest Restoration Grant for Emerald Ash Borer Grant
3. Questions and answers apply to Illinois Technical Assistance Grant for Emerald Ash Borer

Section 1 Questions and answers applicable to both grants.

1. Are grants available to homeowner associations? We have approximately 5300 homes in our association and have a significant infestation of EAB that we have been addressing.

This grant program has been developed to assist communities with tree purchases and planting or receive technical assistance under the Urban and Community Forestry and the Forest Health Cooperative Programs of the United States Department of Agriculture. We define communities as local governments. If your community applies for a grant, the geographic location of those trees is at the discretion of the local government; however, the intent of this program is to manage trees on public property.

2. Are their penalties for overmatch?

No. Overmatching is encouraged.

3. What is a programmatic need and what is an economic need? Can you have one or both?

You might show a programmatic need might with an existing inventory and management plan. For example, your inventory identifies neighborhoods that are heavily populated by ash trees and you have selectively removed infested and low-quality ash trees but now have backlog of replacement planting requests.

An economic need may refer to reduced budget, manpower or workers.

Grantees may have both programmatic and economic need and are advised to express both.

4. Is labor an applicable local match?

Labor dedicated to EAB management is applicable for local match. Labor used for removal of ash trees starting December 1, 2011 through the grant period is applicable for match.

Within the contract period:

- A portion of the cost of trees
- Materials to plant trees (i.e. mulch, not tools)
- Disposal and utilization of ash wood
- All or a portion of the cost:
 - of contracted labor to plant trees
 - of contracted labor to maintain trees
 - of contracted labor to remove trees

Within the contract period:

- In kind labor:
 - In house crews to plant
 - In house crews to maintain
 - In house crews to remove
 - Directly related administrative expenses
 - Volunteer labor to plant or maintain

Outside of the contract period

- Ash tree removal after December 1, 2011 = **Eligible**
- Maintenance of trees is covered after grant is closed = **Not eligible**

6. Do we have to go out to bid for services or tree purchase?

All grantees must comply with the purchasing protocol required by their organizations.

7. Under an 80/20 grant, how much money do we need to reflect in the local share of the budget?

The local share must account for at least 20% of the total project. The table below is an example of minimum local matching funds.

Maximum Allotment	Grant	Minimum Local Share Required	Total Project Size
\$40,000		\$10,000	\$50,000
\$30,000		\$7,750	\$37,750
\$20,000		\$5,000	\$25,000
\$10,000		\$2,500	\$12,500

8. Does either grant provide compensation for tree removal?

Neither grant program provides compensation for removal, but both allow removal to be used as local match.

9. Can we use motor fuel tax or local government distributive fund as local share for matching funds?

Yes, as long as those funds are not being used to match other federally funded projects.

10. Can we use the same local match for multiple projects?

You **may not** use the same money for local match, but you may potentially use money from the same category to match a grant. For example, let's suppose that your tree removal budget for trees removed during the grant period was \$10,000. You could match one grant with \$5000 and the other with \$5000 as long as the funding for those removals was local.

11. Can we pay for professional services to prepare the grant application out of the grant?

No, you may not pay for grant writing or other professional services to prepare a grant request out of either grant funds.

12. Can my budget use volunteer time toward local match and can that volunteer time be valued as greater than municipal staff? For example, can I reflect the value of volunteer as \$20 and municipal staff as \$15?

You may count volunteer time toward your match. On a per hour basis you cannot attribute greater value to a volunteer's time than to an employee. Please note you may not value a volunteer hour at greater than \$20.

13. My community heavily utilizes volunteer time due to low levels of staffing. Can our budget reflect that in the local share as an in kind contribution?

Yes, you may reflect a total volunteer time and cost that is greater than your organization's personnel if you can show that it is because the volunteer hours exceed the staff hours. Per the immediately preceding question you cannot on an hourly basis place greater value on volunteer time than personnel time.

14. Our community tree program shares costs with residents to replant trees. May we use the residents' contribution as local match?

Yes. The only stipulation for matching funds is that the funds not be matched with other federal funds.

15. Are there any fees associated with making the application? I was told that it would cost \$29.99 as an access fee payable to the "New USA Funding". Is this correct?

No. There is no fee to apply. Please download and read the application for instructions.

16. I am preparing our grant application and am curious to know if the village needs any type of Council action or resolution for the application itself?

No council action is required to apply for the grant.

17. How many grants may we submit?

One grant may be submitted for either Urban Restoration or Technical Assistance.

18. Are there any circumstances under which we can submit more than one application?

No.

Questions we are working on for next week:

19. Can we pay Davis Bacon Rate instead of Prevailing Wage due to federal funding?

Section 2. Questions and answers specific to the Illinois Urban Forest Restoration Grant for Emerald Ash Borer

1. How should a park district, whose boundary covers more than one municipal boundary, describe its population? Can you use the total of both municipalities' population?

Park Districts may include the name and population of each community they serve in their application. In determining the amount of funds they are eligible for, Park Districts should take their total square feet and divide it by the square feet of the communities they serve. They may then multiply the total population by that ratio. That total will determine their eligibility of grant size.

A= Total Park District Square Feet

Y = Total Municipal Square feet

Z = Total Populations of all communities served

X = Population served for determining grant fund eligibility

$(A/Y)*Z = X$

2. Our program enables residents to choose trees and due to the finicky nature of our residents, we may not know the exact type or tree that will be planted. Alternatively, we may end up planting a different tree than we had planned to. How should we complete the work plan?

Applicants should do their best to show that they will plant a diverse group of trees that will thrive in their environment. Through the quarterly reporting required of grantees, grantees will be able to update their plans. We understand that changes to plans occur, but we expect you to make a good faith effort to use this program to diversify your tree population for long term sustainability.

3. Is an inventory required to apply for the grant?

An inventory is not required, but it is encouraged to support EAB management planning.

4. Our community tree program shares costs with residents to replant trees. May we use the residents' contribution as local match?

Yes. The only stipulation for matching funds is that the funds not be matched with other federal funds. Additionally the expenditure of those local funds must be well documented.

6. Our community uses pesticides to treat ash trees. Can we get reimbursement for pesticide treatment through this program?

No. The only eligible costs for this program are replanting trees and cost associated with replanting trees as stated in the application. You may include chemical treatments in your local match.

7. To show a one-to-one replacement for removed trees, do these have to be removed after the grant award is made?

No. You can document the one-to-one replacement of ash trees starting in 2008 for the Work Plan Chart (pg. 13 of the RFP).

8. Can we apply for funds to plant seedlings and saplings in our nursery and then transplant those trees to sites where we will eventually remove ash trees from?

In some situations, the federal funding sources for this program disallow planting and replanting trees because tree planting locations for this grant program are intended to be final locations. Communities that wish to propose planting a community nursery must provide a succession plan for the nursery that shows how the nursery will be maintained through key staff and volunteer turnover and shows that long term plans for the land used as a community nursery to will not undermine the nursery. However, communities that wish to grow their own trees for long term sustainability may include this in their local share if costs are incurred during the grant period.

9. If a nursery says that they are about to become an Illinois Department of Agriculture certified nursery may we purchase trees from them?

At the time of purchase, your nursery must be listed as a certified nursery. If you do not purchase from a certified nursery, we will not be able to reimburse you for your expenditures.

10. Does the City need an inventory to apply?

No, it does not; however, the applicant entity must have a reasonable way to state its need and show a 1:1 correlation between removals and replants.

11. Does the use of the funds have to be specific?

Funds may only be used to replant.

12. May park districts plant conifers?

Applicants should consult the reforestation lists at <http://illinoiseab.com/>.

13. To better assist my community it makes sense to plant more than 10% of one of the species. What steps can I take to ensure that this does not count against my application?

Any applicant making nontraditional choices or not adhering to the assurances section should explicitly explain why that it is. If you can provide a reasonable reason for nontraditional choices or not following the assurances the reviewers may not deduct points. If a good explanation for not following instructions is not provided, points will be deducted from the application.

Section 3. Questions and answers specific to the Illinois Technical Assistance Grant for Emerald Ash Borer

1. Is software eligible for reimbursement?

Yes it is eligible provided that its primary purpose is specific to tree inventory and management. Please specify the software in your grant proposal.

2. Regarding scoring and ranking, what factors will determine ranking?

Please refer to the scoring table in the application for scoring and the text above the table for ranking.

3. When can we start spending money on technical assistance?

No costs should be incurred until you receive an award letter. No community may invoice the Caucus for projects not approved of in an award letter.

4. If our project comes in over budget, can we invoice the Caucus for the overage?

You will only be reimbursed up to but not exceeding the amount of funding disclosed in your award letter.

5. Ash Tree Inventory has been completed, but we want to complete a subsequent comprehensive inventory of all of our species. Is this an eligible expense?

Yes, it is eligible. The purpose of the grant program is to generally encourage sustainable urban forest management. A complete inventory should help you manage future invasive pests. While it is eligible, the reviewers may not understand why this is needed for EAB management – so be sure to explain why this will enhance your ability to manage EAB.

6. Can the Mayors Caucus or Arboretum recommend arborists?

No, we cannot recommend an arborist; however, you may refer to the Illinois Arborist Association webpage for a list of certified arborist at <http://www.illinoisarborist.org/CertifiedArboristsNew.htm> Illinois Arborist Association, certified arborists.

7. Can we use funds to pay for existing personnel to perform an inventory?

You may; however, all time spent inventorying trees and billed to the grant will have to be documented using time sheets.

8. Can we purchase IPad, PDAs, Tablets, or other handheld equipment to accomplish grant deliverables?

No, this grant cannot be used to pay for hand held devices; however, those devices if purchased in the grant period can be used toward local match.

9. Can the Technical Assistance Grant be used to pay for outreach, education or marketing expenses?

No, it cannot. However, outreach is a cornerstone of a good EAB management plan and therefore documented costs can be used toward local match.

Resources

www.ilca.net/contractor.aspx To find tree planting contractors, Illinois Landscape Contractors Association

www.illinoisgreen.net/ To find nurseries, Illinois Green Industry Association

www.emeraldashborer.info : This Web site is part of a multinational effort in the US, Ontario and Quebec to bring you the latest information about emerald ash borer.

www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/Pest/emeraldashborer.pdf Illinois EAB Readiness Plan

www.agr.state.il.us/eab/ Illinois Department of Agriculture

www.illinoiseab.com

<http://www.agr.state.il.us/eab/data/201008314752.pdf> Community Action Plan

<http://www.mortonarb.org/tree-plant-advice.html> The Morton Arboretum, Plant Clinic, Tree Selection

<http://www.mortonarb.org/tree-plant-advice/article/16912/caring-for-newly-planted-trees-and-shrubs.html> The Morton Arboretum, Plant Clinic, Tree Planting Instructions

<http://www.westcook.org/wcmc/programs-services/suburban-tree-consortium> The Suburban Tree Consortium, a buying collaborative of the West Central Municipal Conference

<http://www.illinoisarborist.org/CertifiedArboristsNew.htm> Illinois Arborist Association, certified arborists.

www.illinoisurbanwood.org Illinois EAB Wood Utilization Team

www.ilca.net/Index.aspx Illinois Landscape Contractors Association

<http://www.isa-arbor.com/> International Society of Arboriculture

<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/index.shtm> USFS Forest Health Protection
<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/urban/> US Forest Service Urban Forestry

dnr.state.il.us/conservation/forestry/ Division of Forest Resources of the Department of Natural Resources

<http://www.westcook.org/wcmc/programs-services/suburban-tree-consortium>
Suburban Tree Consortium

<http://www.arborday.org/> Arbor Day Foundation, Tree City USA

http://www.tcia.org/Public/gov_standards_a300.htm TreeCare Industry Association, ANSI Standards for the Professional Arborist