



Cincinnati's Urban Timber Program

The Cincinnati Park Board, Cincinnati Public Schools and the Hamilton County Solid Waste District, have partnered to develop a solution to urban wood waste, including Ash trees that may be in jeopardy due to the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The efforts of this partnership have paid off and urban wood waste is now being milled to be used in Cincinnati Public Schools.

When the EAB was first discovered in Hamilton County in May, 2007, the District's Policy Committee requested that a taskforce be assembled to identify ways to use the urban wood waste; primarily Ash, but also other types of trees. The goal of the taskforce was to develop a plan for higher and better use for urban wood waste, including Ash. The taskforce also identified outlets for the milled material with the largest customer being Cincinnati Public Schools.

Cincinnati Park Board has a contract with a portable sawmill operator to saw logs. The material is then transported to Wilhelm Lumber in St. Leon, Indiana where the material is kiln dried and further milled to meet Cincinnati Public Schools specifications. Cincinnati Public Schools will use the material for furniture in their new and renovated schools.

"This is an ideal solution for the use of urban wood waste. Not only are the trees being utilized to their highest and best use, but none of this material is being sent to the landfill" comments Dave Gamstetter, Supervisor of Urban Forestry with the Cincinnati Park Board. Mr. Gamstetter continues, "Using this local resource (urban wood waste) in construction also aides CPS with their LEED certification process and any profit will be used to plant new trees on CPS grounds and in other areas of Cincinnati."

"The partnership and program provides a hands-on learning opportunity for the students of CPS," says Bob Knight with GBBN Architects who leads the sustainable design initiatives for CPS. "The schools will have final products which shows the circle of life, and this is all done with local workforce and materials."

"This is a win-win for all involved and truly a ground-breaking solution for the use of unwanted urban wood waste, specifically infected Ash trees," adds Holly Christmann, Manager of the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District.

For more information about the urban wood waste project, contact Bob Knight 363-0784 at Cincinnati Public Schools. To view additional photos of the urban wood waste being transformed into usable board feet, please visit www.hamiltoncountyclecyls.org, click on NewsRoom, then Photo Gallery.

Should you have any questions, please contact:

Bob Knight

Sustainable Design Initiative Coordinator

GBBN Architects / CPS Authorized Representative

Facilities Master Plan

513.363.0784