Guide to Ash Tree Identification and Evaluation

This is the training guide used by the volunteer Haddonfield Branch Managers in 2017 and 2019, to prepare for their survey of the ash trees growing along Haddonfield's streets. This document is intended to be educational only. Please seek the advice of an arborist who is ISA-certified or a NJ Licensed Tree Expert (LTE) to determine the accurate identification and true condition of your tree.

Identifying the tree location and verifying the species

If you are using the online Haddonfield street tree inventory, here's how to use the inventory to identify the street tree location. The tree location is based on:

- The street address of the residence;
- The location on the street, e.g. F1, S1. 'F' indicates a tree in front of the residence, usually in the park strip. 'S' indicates a tree on a side street next to the residence, usually on a corner property. The number, e.g. F1, F2, F3, is used when there is or was more than one tree in the park strip in front of the residence. The numbers ascend in the direction of the house numbers. A tree shown as 563 Warwick Road, F2, is the second tree in front of this residence when moving from 561 to 563 toward 565 Warwick.

Verify that the tree you are surveying is an ash, either a White Ash or a Green Ash. You can identify an ash most easily based on its compound leaves, as shown below.

Ash leaf	Ash branch detail
	

Ash trees have compound leaves – 7 to 9 leaflets on a single 8-12" leaf (left). Each leaf has a 'leaf bud' just above where it attaches to the branch; there are no such leaf buds at the base of each leaflet. All branches and all leaves are opposite each other, as opposed to alternating on the branch. The photo on the right shows two opposite leaves growing off the base of a center branch. Ash can also be identified by the bark and by its seeds.

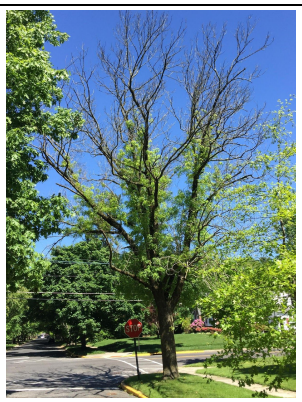
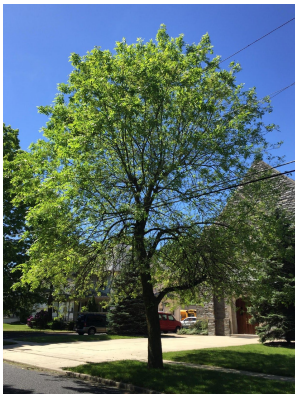
Note that there are other trees with similar compound leaves, for example, hickory, pagoda tree, and ailanthus. All branches and leaves on these trees are alternate.

Assigning the tree condition

Your assessment of a tree's condition should be based on a comparison with the photos below and an assessment of its canopy, as follows:

- Poor: If a tree is determined to be in "poor" condition, that tree should be removed this year as it will most probably be dead by next spring. 50% or more of the branches are bare, often with most of the leaves close to branch intersections.

- Fair: A rating of “fair” indicates that the tree will be in poor condition within 1 or 2 years as it appears to be thinning out significantly. Over 25% of the branches may be bare.
- Good: A rating of “good” means that the tree is showing little or no thinning and is fully leafed out. There may be smaller bare branches throughout the canopy.
- Excellent: There are still ash in Haddonfield with no thinning of the canopy.

Poor: 50% or more bare branches. Leaves will probably grow at the base or the very tips of the branches, rather than along entire branches. There may be dense branch clusters lower on the tree.	 
Fair: Thinning canopy with at least 25% bare branches. With a thinner canopy, you will probably see the outline of the tree branches throughout the tree.	 
Good: No more than 25% bare branches; bare branches are thinner and scattered throughout the tree.