



For Immediate Release – Dec. 31, 2019

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### Fallen ash tree finds new life at Heritage Oaks

HARRISONBURG, Va. – As the City works to mitigate the impacts of the emerald ash borer here at home, Harrisonburg Parks & Rec and Public Works are working hard to make sure lost trees are still put to good use. In fact, you can still see many of those trees as you travel to different spots in the community.

The emerald ash borer is an invasive species that has damaged millions of ash trees across the country, with the damage eventually causing the death of the tree. In Harrisonburg, City staff have worked to identify damaged trees and remove them before they fall, while treating other ash trees in hopes of protecting them.

The City's urban wood utilization efforts have sought to find ways to use the trees that are removed. Many trees went toward a water pollution removal system at Purcell Park, while other trees have been turned into useful projects.

Recently, Harrisonburg Landscape Supervisor Mike Hott coordinated with golf course Superintendent John Libassi to remove a large declining ash tree located behind Heritage Oaks Golf Course's 18th green. The tree was then taken to Willow Run Custom Lumber, Inc., to be processed and dried. Local crafter Stoneybrook Cabinetry used the wood to create a unique new countertop for the golf course pro shop.

“While we are saddened by the loss of these trees, we’re dedicated to doing the best we can with this situation and putting those trees to good use for our community,” Green Space Manager Jeremy Harold said of the new counter. “Projects like this one at our pro shop, as well as the many others we have done with the help of local partners, will help these trees live on in a meaningful way.”

More than 300 trees have been removed from City parks this year as part of the effort, with Parks & Rec planning to plant just as many new trees over the coming months. Another three-dozen trees have been treated in hopes of protecting them.

To see the full progression of the urban wood revitalization process, from tree to countertop, visit Harrisonburg Parks & Rec's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/harrisonburgparksandrecreation](https://www.facebook.com/harrisonburgparksandrecreation). For more information about the City's urban wood utilization efforts, email Harold at [Jeremy.Harold@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Jeremy.Harold@HarrisonburgVA.gov).



*An ash tree damaged by the emerald ash borer was removed from Heritage Oaks (top) and turned into a new counter at the Golf Course Pro Shop (bottom) as part of the City's urban wood utilization efforts.*

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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