



# CITY OF HARRISONBURG PUBLIC WORKS

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(Above left to right) Joe Lehnen, Virginia Dept of Forestry; Jeremy Harold, Harrisonburg Public Works; Kelly Adams, Harrisonburg Public Works; Sec. Bettina Ring, Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry.

## Harrisonburg Urban Wood Program highlighted during Virginia Forestry Association Summit

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The Harrisonburg Urban Forestry staff will get the opportunity to share their unique, environmental-friendly program with the Virginia Forestry Association this week as the organization hosts its annual summit at Hotel Madison.

Harrisonburg Urban Forestry staff will take Summit attendees on a tour Thursday, Sept. 30, that will include several stops around Harrisonburg and focus on learning more about urban wood utilization. The afternoon tour will start at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum where several local experts will talk to the Summit attendees. The next stop is Rocktown Urban Wood, where attendees will tour a facility and showroom that highlights Rocktown Urban Wood's creative take on some everyday objects.

Mashita restaurant, Downtown, will be the next stop. Here a project by Knoched VA using local wood and the Shou Sugi Ban process for treating the wood will be the focus. The final stop of the tour will be at Brothers Craft Brewery for a

look at local wood used in their taproom, as well as a sawmill demonstration in their parking lot led by Gochenour Slabbing Mill.

“Being able to keep dead and dying trees that we have to remove from public lands out of the landfill and give the wood a new purpose is the goal of our Urban Wood Program,” Jeremy Harold, greenspace manager for Harrisonburg Public Works, explained. City staff is looking forward to the opportunity to show Virginia officials the many ways this program can be beneficial to others across the state.

The Harrisonburg Urban Wood Program was established in 2018 in response to the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer. This invasive beetle kills every untreated ash tree that it encounters. You can see the destruction wrought by the EAB larvae on the trunk of the tree, just under the bark.

Unfortunately, ash trees made up 14 percent of the City’s public trees, and City arborists have needed to remove nearly 1,000 trees, so far. The Urban Wood Program makes use of all this wood. Each part of the tree is utilized by the Urban Wood Program, from small branches being chipped into mulch for pollinator habitat spaces and other City projects, to larger branches that are processed into firewood and auctioned on the PublicSurplus.com website, and logs that are saved for lumber or sold on the public surplus site.

***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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