

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **SOUTHERN PINE BEETLE ALERT LETTER GOES OUT TO MAYORS**

**Woodbine**—Mayor William Pikolycky is pleased to announce that he has recently partnered with State Forester Lynn Fleming of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's State Forestry Services to send out a letter to all Mayors of municipalities potentially impacted by the southern pine beetle.

The beetle is a fast-moving destructive bark beetle that causes trees to die very quickly; these trees pose a public safety hazard from both falling limbs and from susceptibility to wildfire. As 70% of southern pine beetle outbreaks are estimated to occur on private or non-DEP public lands, these mayors being notified of this threat and asked for assistance in taking action against it.

The mayors have been asked to designate a municipal liaison for coordinating southern pine beetle suppression efforts with the State Forestry Service. When a new infestation is located, DEP will contact this liaison with outbreak location and recommended suppression action. Removal of infested trees and a buffer of uninfested trees within two to three weeks of detection is required to suppress the outbreak.

"Climate changes have been implicated in the increasing move northward of this infestation, and NJDEP has been swift in taking action to both alert to and address this growing threat wherein more than 14,000 acres of pine forest were infested with the southern pine beetle in 2010," explained Mayor Pikolycky.