



# THE MOUNTAIN Pine Beetle



## What's At Stake

- Alberta's forests are an integral part of our environment and economy.
- Forests act as natural carbon sinks, provide animal habitat, and help to purify our water system.
- Thousands of Albertans in more than 50 communities work in the forest products industry.
- Over 6 million hectares of Alberta's pine forest are at risk of infestation.
- If the pine beetle is not stopped, it could destroy our forests and threaten the environment and economy.

## What We're Doing

- Alberta's forest products industry is working with the Government of Alberta and other stakeholders to curb the spread and lessen the impact of the beetle.
- Companies have worked to identify stands that are vulnerable to the pine beetle and harvest these first.
- Our companies are monitoring wood quality and investigating processes to make use of trees that have been infested by the beetle. Continued research and development into these processes is important.
- Our hard work is beginning to pay off. Aerial survey results show that the beetle's progress has been slowed considerably. The threat remains serious, we have to continue to work to protect our forests.

### THE FACTS

- The mountain pine beetle is about the size of a grain of rice.
- Beetles infect a tree by laying eggs underneath the tree's bark. When the eggs hatch, they introduce a blue-stained fungi which kills the tree's tissue.
- Beetles are most mobile during the late spring and summer months. The beetle moves by flying and being blown by wind currents.
- Beetles are capable of moving several hundred kilometres in a single day. In 2006, strong winds carried several billion beetles from north eastern British Columbia into Alberta's Peace Country.
- All pine trees are susceptible to the beetle. As a tree ages, it becomes more vulnerable to beetle infestation.