

OAK WILT 101

1. Caused by a fungus
2. Transmitted by
 - a. Cutting tools not sterilized
 - b. Sap beetle depositing fungal spores on unpainted fresh wounds after spores picked up from cuts/wounds or from fungal mats on red oaks
 - c. Interconnected roots between live oaks, up to 100 feet
3. Infects live oaks (LOs) and red oaks (ROs)
 - a. Clogs the cells in bark that convey nutrients
 - b. Indicated by foliar distress
 - i. discolored veins in LO leaves (see brochure)
 - ii. reduced leaf production in LOs
 - iii. scorched leaf borders in ROs
 - iv. premature browning, falling foliage
 - c. ROs always die, usually within 6 weeks; no therapy is effective
 - d. LOs usually defoliate over 1-6 months, sometimes 1-2 years
4. 'Alamo' Fungicide injection in LOs
 - a. Preventive or therapeutic, but stressful to any tree
 - b. By licensed arborist only
 - c. Pressurized liquid injection around the exposed root flare, continuous for 5-10 days
5. Infected ROs cannot be treated
 - a. Must be removed immediately when wilt confirmed, per city ordinance, in order to
 - b. Eliminate fungal mats – a layer of mold spores under loose or fallen bark, the primary natural source of new oak wilt outbreak
 - c. Dispose wood properly:
 - i. Bury, or
 - ii. Cover in clear plastic with edges buried for one year (if for firewood)
6. Containment of oak wilt outbreak
 - a. Trenching 4 feet deep to cut interconnected LO roots within 100 feet
 - b. Macro-injection of LOs inside the barrier
 - c. Monitor ROs inside and nearby
 - d. Other barriers: utility trenches, bluffs, creek channels
 - e. Dead LOs, once wood has dried (grain turned from pale yellow to gray), can be firewood
7. Oak Wilt Prevention measures
 - a. Avoid pruning & other wounds Feb-June; best for tree growth to prune only Dec-Jan
 - b. Clean tools w Lysol solution or Clorox solution before each tree
 - c. Paint after each cut -- cut, paint, cut, paint -- *not* when pruning completed
 - d. Manage stress: water; mulch; protect root zone; fertilizer normally not needed
 - e. Tree maintenance planning: irrigation, pruning, managing competitors (esp. invasives)
8. NWACA cost-sharing assistance to homeowners:
 - a. 40%, maximum \$1,000
 - b. abatement plan by TOWC Arborist → texasoakwilt.org/find-a-vendor/certified-arborists
 - c. Board must approve *prior to work*