



OAK WILT IN TEXAS

Oak wilt is an infectious tree disease caused by a fungus. All oak trees are susceptible to this potentially deadly disease. Thousands of acres in Central Texas have already been affected by oak wilt.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Oak wilt can impact entire communities. Infected trees usually die if they are not treated quickly by a qualified arborist. This can affect aesthetics, decrease property value, and be expensive to manage. Ignoring this disease is costly. Prevention is key.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Above Ground By Beetles: The oak wilt fungus can produce spores on red oaks that it has killed. These spores are inadvertently transported by beetles feeding on the fungus. If these beetles land on a fresh wound or pruning cut on an uninfected oak, the spores may enter and infect a new tree.

Below Ground Through Root Connections: Once a new infection starts, the fungus may spread from tree to tree through an interconnected root system. Trees as far as 200 feet apart or more may be at risk. The fungus can spread as rapidly as 75 feet per year.

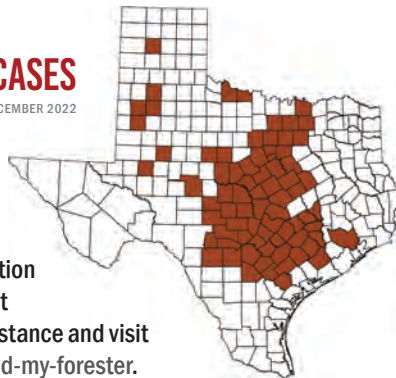
HOW TO RECOGNIZE OAK WILT

Look for defoliation and death of oak trees expanding from a central location. Live oaks will typically defoliate and die in 3-6 months while red oaks may die within 4-6 weeks. The most characteristic symptom of oak wilt is yellow and brown leaf veins in live oaks known as veinal necrosis. Sweet smelling fungal mats may form under the bark of dead red oaks in the spring. Laboratory isolation of the fungus is recommended to confirm the diagnosis. When in doubt, a trained expert should be consulted.



TEXAS COUNTIES WITH CONFIRMED OAK WILT CASES

AS OF DECEMBER 2022



GET HELP

If you suspect that your tree has oak wilt or you need more information on how to prevent oak wilt, contact Texas A&M Forest Service for assistance and visit texasoakwilt.org/getting-help/find-my-forester.

HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF OAK WILT

- Avoid pruning oak trees from February 1 to June 30.
- Make proper pruning cuts.
- Paint all oak wounds/cuts/stumps immediately with any type of paint.
- Never store infected red oaks for firewood use.

HOW TO MANAGE OAK WILT

- Prevent new infections by following the steps above.
- Improve landscape resilience by planting diverse tree species.
- If your trees are affected or at risk, consult with an Oak Wilt Qualified Arborist.
- Trench at least 4 feet deep and 100 feet away from trees with symptoms to stop the spread of oak wilt through tree roots.
- Preserve high-value trees with propiconazole fungicide injections. Fungicide does not stop root transmission of the disease, but it can save individual trees.
- Burn, bury, or chip infected red oaks.
- Communicate with neighbors to monitor the infection area.

PRUNING CALENDAR FOR OAK WILT PREVENTION

FEBRUARY



Beetles that carry the fungal spores from tree to tree are **most active February-June**.

Avoid pruning/wounding oaks February- June if possible. If pruning is a necessity for safety purposes, make sure to **PAINT ALL OAK WOUNDS IMMEDIATELY**.

MAY



Symptoms of oak wilt may be more pronounced this time of year. Reach out to a tree professional if concerned.

JULY

Beetles and fungal mat activity decrease with high temperatures.

AUGUST

Pruning your oak trees in the heat of summer can stress the tree. Try to wait until fall/winter to tackle pruning unless safety is a concern.

OCTOBER

Now is a good time to prune your trees, but **ALWAYS** paint oak wounds immediately!

NOVEMBER

Fall is a great time to plant new trees!

DECEMBER

Don't move firewood! **NEVER** use infected red oak wood.

JANUARY

Wrap up your tree pruning.

