

HOW TO HANDLE OAK WILT DISEASED WOOD

The following is a step-by-step approach to handling wood from a diseased Oak Wilt tree and parameters to make the proper decision in regard to the use of this wood:

- A tree that dies of Oak Wilt disease must be removed and properly handled prior to April 15 of the following year to prevent this dead tree from producing and spreading the oak wilt fungus. This is a very important step to prevent the establishment of new infections from these trees. The disease will still go root to root from the diseased tree to live trees, but this transportation mode is shut down through trenching or the use of herbicide.
- If the diseased tree is going to be used for firewood, all trunk and limb sections greater than 2 inches in diameter, must be consumed that winter. If that is not possible, the wood must be covered completely in 6 ml plastic (bottom and top) and the seam taped tightly with duct tape. This greatly reduces fungus development and prevents fungal spores from being dispersed to other healthy trees. The wood must be left within the plastic until August 15 of the following year. At that time the wood may be removed from the plastic and allowed to dry. It no longer maintains the potential to produce the fungus.
- A diseased tree that, has been dead for longer than a year, will no longer produce the fungus above ground and does not need to receive special treatment when cut down and used for firewood!! KEEP IN MIND THAT THE ROOT SYSTEM OF THIS TREE IS STILL ALIVE AND TRANSPORTING THE DISEASE TO NEARBY HEALTHY TREES.
- If the wood is not going to be used for firewood, it must still be prevented from producing the oak wilt fungus. It may be burned up or taken to an approved yard waste facility. Again branches less than 3 inches in size may be left or burned and do not need to be covered.

It is extremely important to maintain above ground sanitation of the site to prevent formation of new fungal mats in trees that died the summer before. If you follow the steps above, control of the disease through trenching or selective herbicide treatment will be much more successful.

**CREATED BY: LAND MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS, LLC
THOMAS MEIER: 715-409-0969**