



## Fact Sheet #4—Tree Removals

### Why does an elm infected with Dutch elm disease have to be removed?

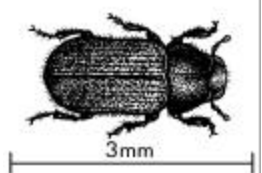
When an elm tree has tested positive for Dutch elm disease (DED), it has to be removed and destroyed. If it is left standing, other elm trees will become infected by the fungus.

The native elm bark beetle (NEBB), the main carrier of the disease in Saskatchewan, spreads the disease as it moves through its life cycle. In June, the NEBB uses dying wood including DED-infected trees and logs as breeding material. Then in August the new beetles emerge, first feeding, and then over-wintering, on healthy elms. The DED fungus shuts down the tree's water-conducting vessels, killing it in as little as three weeks, and usually within one or two seasons.

### When can an elm tree be removed?

Although there is no legal restriction as to when you can remove an elm tree, we recommend that you remove elms **before or after the annual elm pruning ban of April 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>**. A DED-infected elm may need to be removed during this period to keep the NEBB from spreading the fungus to healthy elms.

If you cut down an elm during the pruning ban, the smell of freshly cut elm wood may attract the beetle to adjoining elm trees. Prior to disposal, the cut wood will also serve as breeding material.



*Enlarged view of the native elm bark beetle that carries the DED fungus.*

### How does one go about removing an elm tree?

Whether you are removing a diseased tree or a healthy elm, the provincial *Dutch Elm Disease Regulations* require you to remove the tree in a certain manner, and dispose of it promptly and properly.

Whenever possible, an elm tree should be removed **10 centimetres below the ground line** (usually by stump grinding) and back filled with dirt. You can also strip the bark off the stump down to mineral soil (burn the bark or bury it under 25 cm of soil) or burn the stump until all the bark is burned off of the stump or is loose from the stump.



*An infected elm should be cut down and disposed of at the nearest disposal site.*

The stump can also be removed entirely and disposed of at a designated disposal site by burying it with a minimum of 25 cm of soil. Removing or debarking the stump level to the ground is also acceptable, but only if the remaining stump is treated with a mixture of diesel and 2-4-D. Once you have cut the stump as low to the ground as possible, treat all surfaces, including the remaining bark and cut area, with a liberal coating of the diesel and 2-4-D (ester/ oil-based ) mixture. Use 16 parts diesel to one part 2-4-D (16:1).



*Removing or debarking the stump to ground level is only acceptable if the stump is treated with diesel and 2-4-D.*

It is recommended that you also spray an area about one inch in diameter around the stump, where it meets the ground. This should help prevent the tree from suckering and becoming a continued source of the disease.

## What do you do with the tree once it is removed?

Once removed, the tree must **immediately** be disposed of whether infected or not. Dispose of all parts of the tree including the bark. A DED-infected tree left lying around will still spread the disease. Wood from a healthy tree can also contribute to DED by serving as beetle breeding material. The more breeding material there is, the higher the beetle population and the faster the disease spread.

The DED regulations require each municipality to designate a disposal site for elm wood. This may be located at the local landfill, or

preferably a separate site altogether. Check with your local municipal office for the one nearest you. The tree and all its parts, including the bark should be either buried to a depth of at least 25 cms, or burned. If you live in a rural municipality, this may be done directly on site.

## How do you establish a designated disposal site?

According to *The Dutch Elm Disease Control Regulations* under *The Pest Control Act*, "Every municipality should designate a disposal site where elm trees may be taken to be burned or buried . . ." (Sect. 7)

### Designated Disposal Site Criteria:

1. Can be located at an existing landfill, but should be separate from the main disposal area.
2. Residents should be aware of where to take elm wood.
3. Should be free-of-charge.

4. Should be accessible at all times of the year.
5. Should tolerate large trucks and heavy loads.
6. Should be 1.5 to 4.5 km beyond the control site and on the opposite side of prevailing winds.
7. Should be away from dwellings and wild elm stands.
8. Should be well signed.

### Disposal Methods:

1. Burn all wood including all of the bark or
2. Bury to a minimum depth of 25 cm and
3. Dispose of all wood as quickly as possible. Prompt disposal is particularly urgent from April to September when the NEBB is the most active.
4. Dispose of elm wood chips and do not use as mulch.

Note: In a rural or northern municipality, an owner may alternatively "burn or bury the elm tree on the owner's property where the elm tree was located."

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