



City of Sarnia

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: April 15, 2018 RELEASE DATE: Immediate

FROM: Rob Harwood, Director, Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: Do Not Prune Oak Trees April through October

For the second year in a row, Sarnia residents are urged not to prune or damage oak trees April through October, to prevent the spread of the oak wilt disease.

Oak wilt is a vascular disease of oak trees, caused by a fungus. The fungus grows on the outer sapwood of oak trees restricting the flow of water and nutrients through the tree. Oak trees can die within weeks after infection.

The disease is spread by beetles but also through grafted tree roots. Fresh wounds on trees can attract beetles that are one of the culprits responsible for spreading the disease.

Follow these steps to prevent the spread of oak wilt:

1. Do not prune oak trees April through July
2. Do not move firewood
3. Use weed trimmers and mowers cautiously near trees

Oak wilt has not yet been found in Ontario — but Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry experts are concerned because it has spread across Michigan and is on Belle Isle in the Detroit River between Detroit and Windsor.

"The City of Sarnia has a healthy and vibrant population of oak trees. We want to protect these trees by using prevention strategies that can stop the oak wilt disease before it spreads to our community," explains Patti Ross, Manager of Parks, Forestry & Horticulture.

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