



Policy – Corporate Environmental

Title: Oak Wilt Prevention

1.0 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Oak Wilt Prevention Policy is to document measures LCRA staff and contractors will take to prevent the spread of oak wilt while handling oak trees.

2.0 Definitions

Oak Wilt: A tree disease caused by the fungus, *Ceratocystis Fagacearum*. The fungus infects the conductive tissue (*xylem*) of the tree, which contains vessels that transport moisture throughout the tree. The oak wilt fungus causes the infected tree to produce tylosis. The production of tylosis becomes so significant that the tree can no longer transport water throughout its vascular system. The end result, in most cases, is tree mortality.

3.0 Prevention Policy

- 3.1 LCRA will initially train all staff involved with projects dealing with oak trees and follow up with annual refresher trainings. Staff receiving such training would include, but is not limited to, project managers and equipment operators responsible for removing or trimming trees. In addition, LCRA staff will train all right-of-way workers and contractors involved with projects dealing with oak trees before they start field work in areas with oak trees.
- 3.2 When possible, staff and contractors should avoid trimming or pruning Live Oak trees and other species of Red Oak (Spanish, Shumard, Water, and Black Jack) during February to June.
- 3.3 At all times, sterilization of equipment and painting wounds are mandatory when trimming or pruning susceptible species.
- 3.4 Sterilization of tree removal and trimming equipment will occur before leaving the project area and will involve using either aerosol disinfectant or a 10 percent bleach-water solution. In addition, the trimming equipment would be sterilized thoroughly before it is used again.
- 3.5 Irrespective of limb size, all cuts and wounds must be painted with an asphalt or latex-based tree paint. Such painting will include stump-cuts and damaged roots both above and below ground.
- 3.6 At a minimum, LCRA will seal cuts of all oak trees. But as a conservative measure LCRA may elect to seal cuts of all hard wood trees on a case by case basis.

4.0 Disposal Policy

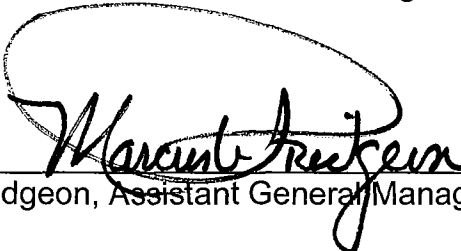
- 4.1 Chipping or shredding the wood from infected trees to use as mulch is an acceptable means of recycling the wood. Chipping or

shredding allows the wood to dry out quickly, thereby killing the fungus.

- 4.2 Burning diseased wood is an acceptable means of disposal. Burning diseased logs kills the oak wilt fungus; in addition, the fungus does not spread with smoke.
- 4.3 Firewood from diseased trees should not be stored near healthy trees because fungal spores or insects which carry the spores have the potential spread the fungus. If the brush or logs are to be left for firewood, the LCRA representative must explain to the land owner or land owner representative that the brush or logs may be infected and warn them of the hazards associated with storage. LCRA representatives may fulfill this landowner notification obligation by providing pertinent information in 4.3 and 4.4 of this policy to the landowner or landowner's representative. Logs over four inches or 10 centimeters in diameter at breast height must be girdled (bark removed), as fungal mats have been found on logs this size and larger after the tree has been felled.
- 4.4 It is recommended to store oak firewood under a sheet of clear plastic and tightly seal the edges of the plastic with soil or bricks. Doing so will prevent any spore-carrying beetles from escaping. It is also important to use clear plastic, as black plastic will reveal any escape holes to the beetles.
- 4.5 LCRA staff or its contractors will recycle or appropriately dispose of all unused disinfectants.

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