



Tales From The Wood *Summer Update*

Summer Tree Update

Cooler temperatures and an unprecedented amount of rain is quite a change from the past spring/summers' weather in the Charlotte Metro area. All of this precipitation can be both a blessing and curse for our trees.

The blessings come from finally pulling out of a seasons long, stress inducing, drought. Trees are putting out incredible amounts of lush green foliage. We've seen a new flush of growth in July. Trees are putting out more photosynthetic area to complement all of the available water. For many trees and woody ornamentals this season's ample rainfall may be a welcomed lifesaving event.

While an enormous amount of growth can help the health and vigor of a tree, it may not be the best thing for the structural stability of the tree. For one, the increase in available water means more water being held in the branches and leaves of the tree. This extra water adds extra weight, which increase the likelihood of branch/stem failure. For another, an unprecedented amount of growth in one season may not give a tree enough time to form reaction wood along the branch or stem, thus making the tree, or tree part, more likely to fail in a storm event. Saturated soils also reduce the friction needed for roots to hold the tree up, and can contribute to root diseases and rots.

This prolonged rainy season is also affecting plant pests and diseases. Spring like weather is extending the infection period of fungal leaf diseases well past the months they are usually active. Species that are generally resistant to fungal diseases are becoming infected due to the increased disease pressure. That being said, the torrential rain

events are suppressing some arthropod pests, like aphids and spidermites, by simply knocking them off and washing them away from the plant.

So what can you do???.? Look at your trees. There are certain tree conditions that may predispose them to failure. Trees with co-dominant stems (2 or more stems originating from the same place on the tree) more than half the diameter of the parent stem are the most likely part of a tree to fail. Large tree branches that appear to 'over-extend' from the rest of the canopy is another sign of potential branch failure. A sudden soil mound close to the base of a tree is a potential sign of root plate failure. Conks and mushrooms on, or around, the tree are signs of internal decay which may predispose the tree to failure.



Bradford pear with co-dominant stems and associated crack. Had an overall crown reduction been performed, this tree may have been saved.



Ganoderma Conks on Stem and Roots

'Hen of the Woods' Conk on Root Flare

If you haven't had an arborist look at your trees lately, now is the time. Preventative actions, like reduction pruning, can help lower your tree's chance of failure. Installing structural support systems, such as cables or brace rods in trees is another way to protect your trees, and property, from harm

~ There is always Music amongst the trees in the Garden, but our hearts must be very quiet to hear it. ~Minnie Aumonier

Emerald Ash Borer: The Coming Threat

What is Emerald ash borer?



Adult Emerald Ash Borer Pic by Howard Russell, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org

Emerald ash borer (EAB), *Agrilus planipennis*, is an exotic beetle that was discovered in southeastern Michigan near Detroit in the summer of 2002. The natural range of EAB, is eastern Russia, northern China, Japan, and Korea. The beetle had not been detected in the US before 2002. Since its discovery, EAB has been found from Canada to the South Eastern US.

The adult beetles superficially feed on leaves, but the larvae (the immature stage) feed underneath the bark in the vascular system of the tree. The damage caused by EAB larvae effectively cuts off water and nutrient flow within the tree.

Why Should I Be concerned about emerald ash borer?

Emerald Ash Borer has been detected in Grandville County, NC and EAB is present in Tennessee and Virginia where it has killed most untreated ash trees. EAB affects all genera of ash. To date it has not infected any other species of tree but ash trees.

What are the signs & symptoms of emerald ash borer



Ash Crown Dieback Pic by Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org



Epicormic Branches along Trunk Pic by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bugwood.org

Why Should I Be concerned about emerald ash borer?

EAB moves fast to do irreconcilable damage to ash trees. Infected trees exhibit tip dieback followed by large limb mortality. One-third to one-half of the branches may die in one year. Epicormic branches may develop along the trunk. Most of the canopy may die within 2 years of initial symptoms.

EAB larvae form characteristic serpentine galleries under the bark of the tree. Bark cracks, or sunken areas on the trunk are symptomatic. In late spring, adult beetles emerge from trees leaving D-shaped exit holes.



D-Shaped Exit Holes Pic by Brandon Hogan, Heartwood Tree Service



EAB Larva in Serpentine Gallery Pic by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bugwood.org

What can I do?

Preventatively treating your ash trees is the only way to save them against EAB. Ash trees that are not protected may eventually become infected, and may die.

Heartwood Arborists have several proven methods for combating EAB. We can develop a plan that works best for you and your landscape.

~For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver. ~Martin Luther

Heartwood Tree Service's TCIA Accreditation

In 2004, Heartwood Tree Service chose to pursue a new accreditation put forth by the Tree Care Industry Association. We felt that if we could achieve this, it would lay the foundation for a safer and more productive company. It would put a stamp on the values and beliefs that the company already had that we could pass on to our customers. So, on July 27, 2005, Heartwood Tree Service became the first company in North Carolina to become Accredited by the TCIA



So, now you may be asking, "What does this TCIA Accreditation do for me?" Well, it insures value. Bang for your buck, as they say. In an industry that is the second most dangerous occupation in the world, it is good to know that you are hiring a company that has put safety first. It also insures that the company has systems and policies in place to give you an experience, from start to finish, that will leave you more than happy. We like to call it the "Heartwood Experience".

To become Accredited, a company has to go through an onsite audit that looks at many different aspects of the way a tree service is run. It doesn't stop there either. There are yearly checkups and every three years another onsite audit. This ensures that the company is always moving forward and improving upon itself.

Looking at safety is a major component of the process. It ensures that not only are individuals safe, but the company as a whole. TCIA looks at your track record and policies in place. It ensures you take proper records and are in compliance with all standards set forth by OSHA and ANSI for the industry. As well as State and Federal DOT and Employee Labor Laws. The accreditation process ensures that there are documented safety training programs and CPR/First Aid training for all employees. We also have to maintain a certain number of Certified Treecare Safety Professionals on staff as well as Certified Arborists. Right now we have two CTSP's and sixteen Certified Arborists. Yep, that's sixteen. Oh yeah, we also have two Board Certified Master Arborists. I can't forget about the two Certified Municipal Specialists and seven Certified Tree Workers we have as well. This list is going to grow soon too! All employees are empowered to achieve these certifications and are doing so.

By becoming a safer and accredited company, we also get a better rate than most on our workers comp insurance, which can be astronomical in this industry. And that savings can be passed on to you. It's like an auto quote. If you don't speed, get into accidents, and drive defensively, you save money.



The business side of things also benefits from accreditation. TCIA looks at how the company operates and your business plan. By having good communication and standard practices, there are less mistakes, call backs and complaints. We know that no one is perfect, so they look at complaint resolution too. Utilizing standard written specs is of utmost importance that employees, salesmen, and customers are all on the same page.

From the first time you call us, until the service we provide is completed, and the fact you are truly satisfied, are all documented. Don't worry, we are mostly electronic now, so paper is not being wasted. We do love trees you know.

I could discuss many more things we do as a TCIA Accredited Tree Service, but I feel that you get the point. We hold ourselves to a higher standard and have become an industry leader. Just ask around, people all around the world know us. When I go to climbing competitions or conventions proudly wearing my Heartwood shirt, tree guys and gals come up to me and ask, "So you work for Heartwood? I've heard of you guys." And another relationship is born. It really makes me proud of all the hard work that is put in by everyone at Heartwood to be the best. Best of all, it should make you proud and feel safe to know that you have hired a TCIA Accredited company to care for your trees.

Jeff Fabian
Safety Director of Heartwood Tree
Service, LLC.

*~It is difficult to realize how great a part of all that is cheerful and delightful in the recollections of our own life is associated with trees.
~Wilson Flagg*

Fall is on the Way

Fall is a great time for pruning your trees and shrubs, and many people wait until fall to meet with arborists and schedule work. This season has brought many severe storms, and with these storms comes a lot of unplanned work for we arborists.



If you are thinking of having work performed this fall, call us now. The sooner we can meet with you, the easier it will be for us to schedule your work in the time frame you'd expect. Keep in mind fall is also a great time to fertilize your trees and shrubs. We look forward to hearing from you.

*~ A seed hidden in the heart of an apple is an orchard invisible.
~Welsh Proverb*