

Elm Trees

What does an Elm tree look like?

American elms are easily recognized around Chestermere with their tall straight trunks and vase-shaped canopy.

Branching starts high off the ground and grows upward, creating a vase/umbrella shaped canopy

The bark of an elm tree is rough, usually dark grey with deeply grooved ridges.

The leaves are dark green, 7-15 cm long and 2.5-5 cm wide with serrated edges.

Chestermere has over 850 Elm trees planted on public property making up over 10% of the City-owned tree population.



Pests of Elm Trees

European Elm Scale

One of the most prevalent pests of Elm trees in Chestermere, is European Elm Scale (EES). EES is a small soft scale that attacks all species of Elm trees. They are identified as small oval shaped brown bumps with a white fringe around their bodies. This insect feeds by sucking sap from the branches and leaves. A heavy infestation can cause branch die back and even death in unhealthy trees.

They are often first noticed by their honeydew the females produce in late spring/early summer. The honeydew is associated with the black sooty mould the begins to grow on the bark of the tree. The honeydew is also the sticky substance that you find on your car and sidewalk located under the infected tree.



Control Methods

The city uses a system insecticide called TreeAzin as a control method on select high value trees. TreeAzin is produced from Neem tree seeds extracts and is injected directly into the base of the trees. EES can also be washed off with high pressure water. This works best in the spring and can be quite messy.



Dutch Elm Disease

Another pest that attacks our Elm trees is Dutch Elm Disease (DED). DED is caused by a fungus that clogs the trees water conducting system causing the tree to die. The fungus spreads from one tree to another by Elm Bark Beetles (EBB). One of the earliest signs of an infected tree is flagging, where the leaves of one or more branches near the top of the tree may wilt, curl, turn yellow and then brown while still remaining on the tree.

Alberta is fortunate to have the largest stand of uninfected Elms in North America. This is largely due to the diligence of Alberta's Society to Prevent Dutch Elm Disease (STOPDED) and its members.

Chestermere is able to contribute to the province wide EBB Monitoring program in an effort to detect EBB movement early. There are also additional measures legislated to prevent the spread of DED. Some highlights are:

- **Do not** transport or store elm firewood at any time!
- **Do not** transport elm firewood into Alberta! Firewood is confiscated at all the Alberta-Montana border crossings.
- **Do not** prune elms between April 1 to September 30.

The ***only*** time it is ***legal*** to prune elms in Alberta is between October 1 and March 31. This is a province wide Elm pruning ban. This is when the elm bark beetles, responsible for spreading the deadly DED fungus, are not active. Elm bark beetles feed on healthy elms and breed and overwinter in dead and dying elm trees. If elm trees are pruned between April 1 and September 30, beetles will be drawn to the scent of the fresh pruning cuts, potentially infecting an otherwise healthy elm.

What can you do to make sure our Elm trees are healthy?

- Do not damage the root collar. This is commonly done with sting trimmers and is very harmful to the health of the tree.
- Report issues that may be detrimental to the tree's health to The City's Parks Department at parkrecreation@chestermere.ca or call (403) 207-2807.
- Be aware of the Alberta elm pruning ban between April 1 and September 30. The beetles are most active at this time and can be attracted to the scent of fresh tree cuts, possibly infecting a healthy elm.
- Water elms well from April to mid-August. To allow the tree to harden off for the winter, watering should be stopped mid-August followed by a good soaking or two before freeze-up. Give the tree on the boulevard in front of your house a drink too.
- Only between October 1 to March 31, remove dead branches and trees as they can provide beetle habitat.
- Dispose of all elm wood immediately by burning, burying or chipping.
- Report all suspect trees to the DED Hotline at 1-877-837-ELMS. A confirmed DED tree must be removed immediately to prevent further spread.

Additional info regarding Dutch Elm Disease can be found here: <https://www.alberta.ca/dutch-elm-disease.aspx>



CHESTERMERE

Help keep Alberta Dutch Elm Disease free. Prevention starts at home.

The elm bark beetle, which transports the DED fungus, is attracted to fresh wounds on elm trees. The Alberta elm pruning ban prohibits pruning when the beetles are most active.

DON'T PRUNE ELM TREES FROM APRIL 1 TO SEPT 30

For proper pruning, hire a professional arborist.

- Do not store elm wood
- Prune between Oct 1 and Mar 31
- Dispose of all elm wood at a landfill, or bury or burn immediately
- Keep elm trees healthy by watering well



www.stoppeded.org
1-877-837-ELMS (3567)



Alberta Agriculture and Forestry