

European Elm Scale

European elm scale is an introduced soft scale insect that attacks American elm as well as hackberry. This insect is usually noticed when the honeydew produced by female scales begins to grow black sooty mold on tree trunks, branches and outdoor amenities. European elm scale produces one generation per year.

In late May to early June, mature scale can be identified on branches and tree forks. They are up to 10mm long, oval and gray-brown in color with a white waxy fringe. Crawlers, which are yellow in color emerge in late June to early July and are found on the underside of leaves. The feeding of European elm scale can cause stunted chlorotic foliage, premature leaf drop and branch dieback.

Elm scale control can include dormant oil application, pressure washing and tree injection of a botanical injectable insecticide formulated with azadirachtin, an extract of neem tree seeds (not neem oil). Dormant oil should be applied before the buds swell and before new growth starts in the spring or in the fall after leaf drop. If applied after growth starts, the new tissue can be damaged. Be sure to read and follow all label instructions. It is important to make thorough coverage when you spray, taking care to spray bark crevices and cracks where insects may be overwintering. Pressure washing of affected trees will wash the sooty mold off and can reduce scale populations by knocking the insects off the tree. This can be done before bud break in the spring or in the fall after leaf drop in order not to damage foliage. Care should be taken not to damage tree bark and foliage. Tree injections must be done by a certified pesticide applicator as the insecticide is a registered pesticide with Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency.

Note that elms can only be pruned between October 1 and March 31 by provincial law to prevent the spread of Dutch elm disease. www.stopped.org

European Elm Scale Management Program

European elm scale is an insect that feeds on the stems (twigs & branches) of elm trees. If left unmanaged it can cause significant branch die back and in some cases may contribute to its death.

Cultural tools of our management program includes planning tree species diversity in the urban forest, applying mulch to encourage growth, spraying dormant oil, and pressure washing the scale off the stems with non-potable water. In conjunction with our cultural practices we do pesticide trunk injections with a natural insecticide derived from neem oil from the seeds of neem trees.

- **Dormant oil applications are done in the spring prior to leaf out (April - May)**
- **Tree injections of elms takes place in spring summer (June – July)**

Contact the Urban Forester at 403-938-6333 for more information or submit an inquiry by clicking the link below.

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