



Pine Beetle Information Sheet

General Information

The Okanagan is currently facing an outbreak of Western Pine Beetle. If you have Ponderosa Pine Trees on your property, please check for the following signs of beetle attack:

1. The tree has turned yellow or red. Note that it may take months before an attacked tree changes colour.
2. Stripped bark due to woodpeckers
3. A regular pattern of holes where the beetles have entered the tree bark. Pitch or sawdust may be visible at these holes



Infested Tree



Adult Pine Beetle (actual length 6mm)



Tubes left from beetle larvae



Pitch tubes left from beetle

If you suspect that a tree has been attacked, you may carefully peel some of the layers of bark away with a hatchet to look for beetles or grubs. Beetles create a series of tunnels inside the bark of attacked trees. Eventually the wood becomes stained blue due to a fungus. Infected trees need to be removed.

Tree mortality can occur very rapidly so early detection of infested trees is key to minimizing damage and spreading of the beetle. Monitor your trees periodically throughout the year. Every infested tree that is removed can help save many other trees on your property and in your neighborhood.

Prevention

Pine beetles prefer to attack weakened trees but will attack healthy trees during an outbreak. Keep your trees healthy by avoiding heavy pruning, root or trunk damage or placing fill over the root zone. Some supplemental watering of trees during hot summer months may also help.

The City of Vernon is attempting to protect significant trees on City property using a combination of the following methods:

1. **Wrapping:** This method involves wrapping the first 30 feet of a tree's trunk with plastic mesh window screening to create a physical barrier between the trunk and the beetle.
2. **Repellent:** This method of beetle control involves attaching repellent pouches (verbenone) onto high risk trees.

Although neither method is guaranteed to be effective local tree maintenance companies are familiar with these methods and can assist you with an evaluation of your trees and help determine if these methods are suitable for your situation.

The most effective method of Pine Beetle control is the removal and disposal of infested trees. **Beetle infested trees can not be used for firewood, transported or stored for any length of time unless they are debarked.** Infested bark should be chipped or buried to ensure adults and larvae are destroyed.

For further information please contact City Operations at 549-6757