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**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

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PARKS AND RECREATION
• NORTH
• SOUTH
• CITY-WIDE

WALTER S. UEDA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

November 19, 1991

**CITY COUNCIL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

HONORABLE MEMBERS IN SESSION:

SUBJECT: Status Report on Dutch Elm Disease in Sacramento

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT

City Wide

SUMMARY:

This report provides the City Council with the current status of Dutch Elm Disease in Sacramento. Previous reports on this subject were presented to the City Council in August and October of 1990.

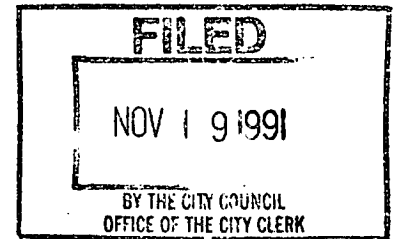
RECOMMENDATION

This report is for information only.

BACKGROUND:

Dutch Elm Disease (DED) was first diagnosed in the City of Sacramento in July of 1990 when a tree at 10th and G Streets tested positive for the disease. The City of Sacramento has a population of approximately 15,000 Elm trees on public property and several thousand more on private property. DED is a contagious fungus disease that only attacks Elms and related species such as Zelkovas. Tree death may occur within a few weeks or gradually, branch by branch, over several years.

Since the original discovery of the disease in July of 1990, a total of ten (10) trees have been diagnosed positively for DED. Six (6) trees were diagnosed and removed in 1991. They were located at 26th and E Streets, 40th and T Streets, and on Dry Creek Road north of Interstate 80. Within 40 hours of the DED diagnosis, these trees were removed and the wood buried according to the State of California's DED guidelines.



The following steps are being taken by the Department of Parks and Community Services in response to DED:

1. City Tree Services, in cooperation with the State Department of Forestry, is continuing to assess elm trees for signs of DED.
2. The City will remove any positively diagnosed trees within 10 days, well in advance of the 20 days required by the State Department of Forestry guidelines for DED.
3. City Tree Services' trimming crews will continue to inspect all elm trees in the City, both public trees and private trees, for signs of DED.
4. Tree Services has prepared an informational handout which will help the public understand the disease and what steps they should take if they think their tree may have DED (see attached Exhibit A). The handout is distributed at the door step during the elm tree inspections.
5. Status reports will be presented to the City Council and the City Manager on a quarterly, or as needed, basis regarding DED.
6. The Department will continue to work with the State Department of Forestry, the County Agricultural Commission, the Sacramento Tree Foundation and other cities, counties and park districts regarding DED. The City is coordinating monthly meetings with officials from the State and County who comprise the DED project team.

City Tree Services will continue a proactive program for elm trees which began over ten years ago. In 1980, the City recognized that the elm trees were in a state of decline and began a reforestation program to remove the failing elm trees and replant with a variety of species including oak, sycamore, liquidambar, chinese pistache, maple and ginkgo, among others. The City has been removing an average of 100 elms each year for the past ten years.

With the diagnosis of Dutch Elm Disease, the number of elms removed each year may increase. At this time, City Tree Services does not know how many elm trees may die as a result of DED. Recent experience in Marin County provides the best comparison available as to what may happen in Sacramento. The worst year for DED in Marin was 1985 when they lost 154 trees (1.5 percent of their population of 10,000 elm trees). Based on what happened in Marin County, the State Department of Forestry and the City Arborist believe that a worst case scenario for Sacramento would be a loss of from two to three percent of the elm population in a single year. This would mean approximately 300 to 450 trees removed in a year due to DED. The cost for removal and disposal of 400 trees is approximately \$600,000.

Tree Services is anticipating that a quarantine area for elm trees will be expanded to the entire county based on the recent 1991 findings within the next several weeks. A quarantine area means that no elm wood can leave the area and no elm trees can be sold or brought into the area. The boundaries have been established by the State Department of Food and

Agriculture. The most significant impact of the quarantine will be the elm wood waste disposal procedures.

The Department is continuing to work with the State and the Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division, to find the most economical method of disposing of the elm wood waste. The City currently has a contractual agreement with L & D Landfill. Under this agreement, the City receives \$5 per ton for its wood waste, including all elm. This arrangement may need to be modified if the number of DED trees increases significantly.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

City Tree Services' current budget of \$3 million includes \$120,000 for the removal of approximately 50 to 100 elms annually. In the worst case scenario, \$600,000 may be required to remove and dispose of the wood from 400 elm trees. If the disease were to spread rapidly or if wood disposal costs increase, additional funding for removal and disposal may be required. See Exhibit B for estimates of the impact of DED on Tree Services' budget.

We remain cautiously optimistic that spread of the disease will not accelerate.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

No change in the City's current policy regarding elm trees is called for at this time.

MBE/WBE EFFORTS

None.

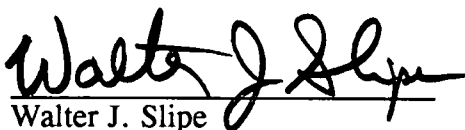
Respectfully Submitted By:

 PB

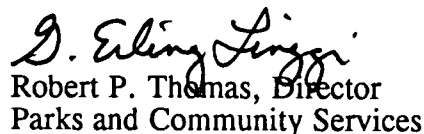
Ken Harris, Manager
Parks and Recreation, City-wide

Recommendation Approved By:

Approved:



Walter J. Slipe
City Manager


Robert P. Thomas, Director
Parks and Community Services

CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION: Martin Fitch, 449-6258

KH/RPT:pmg
c/thomas and K/council rtrsded

DUTCH ELM DISEASE IN THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO**WHAT IS DUTCH ELM DISEASE (DED)?**

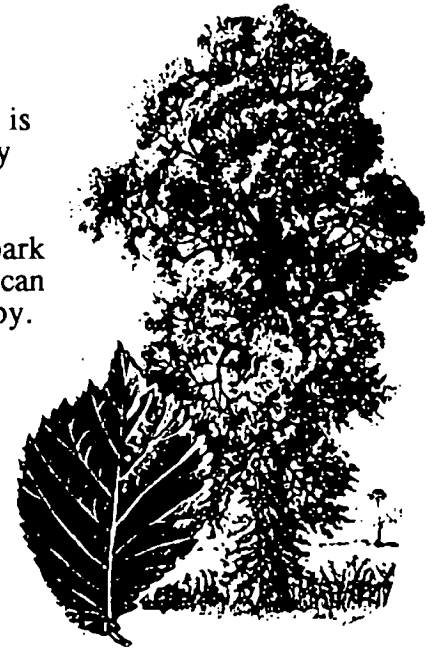
Dutch Elm Disease is a fungus wilt disease which clogs the Elm tree's water conducting system. Symptoms of the disease are sudden wilting or yellowing of the leaves on individual branches or the entire tree. Wilted leaves curl, turn from dull green to yellow and brown, often falling prematurely. Tree death may occur within a few weeks or gradually, branch by branch, over several years.

HAS DUTCH ELM DISEASE BEEN FOUND IN SACRAMENTO?

Yes, Dutch Elm Disease has been found in eight large Elms in Sacramento over the past 15 months. Within several days of the discoveries, the trees were removed and buried at an approved landfill site. The City of Sacramento is taking the discovery of Dutch Elm Disease very seriously. There are approximately 15,000 Elm trees on City property and another 2,500 on private property within the City limits.

HOW DOES DUTCH ELM DISEASE SPREAD?

DED is most often spread from tree to tree by the Elm Bark Beetle. This is a different beetle from the Elm Leaf Beetle which has been present in City elm trees for many years. The Elm Leaf Beetle causes leaves to become transparent and drop prematurely but does not kill the tree. The Elm Bark Beetle spreads the Dutch Elm Disease fungus by feeding under the bark and spreads the disease by moving from tree to tree. Dutch Elm Disease can also be spread from an infected root system to a healthy one planted nearby. Elm Bark Beetles also breed under the bark of cord wood or other dead wood and may infest other trees. That is why burying the wood from infected trees is critical to stop the disease from spreading.

**HOW CAN I TELL IF MY TREES ARE ELM TREES?**

Only Elm trees and related species such as Zelkovas can contract DED. The drawing here represents the most common elms in the Sacramento area. Most of these trees were planted in the early 1900's and are quite large.

WHAT STEPS IS THE CITY TAKING TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF DED?

The City of Sacramento Tree Services personnel have received additional training on identifying trees with Dutch Elm Disease and proper methods for removing infected trees. Staff has begun a comprehensive program to inspect all Elm trees in the City of Sacramento and have suspect trees tested for the disease. Trees diagnosed with DED will be removed immediately.

WHAT CAN I DO?

If you suspect that you have an Elm tree with Dutch Elm Disease you should:

- 1. Confirm that the tree is an Elm species.**
 - 2. Consider whether the tree may have Elm Leaf Beetle symptoms rather than Dutch Elm Disease.**
 - 3. Contact City Tree Services at 449-5304 if you suspect Dutch Elm Disease in the City limits.**
- If you suspect an Elm tree in the County of Sacramento, telephone 440-6291.**

The City of Sacramento Tree Services is hopeful that with early detection, proper methods of removing diseased trees and the drier climate of Sacramento, the spread of Dutch Elm Disease can be controlled and tree loss can be kept to a minimum. Your assistance with this effort is appreciated.

ELM TREE REMOVAL COSTS *

IMPACT FROM DUTCH ELM DISEASE IN SACRAMENTO

Best Case Scenario

10 additional trees to be removed annually due to DED

Removal cost including stump grinding (\$1,500 per tree average) \$ 15,000 **

Worst Case Scenario

400 additional trees (2-3 per cent of total City elm tree population) to be removed annually due to DED

Removal cost including stump grinding (\$1,500 per tree average) \$ 600,000 ***

- * Estimates for elm tree removals by City staff
- ** Can be funded through existing Tree Services budget
- *** May require additional funding