

Cottony Ash Psyllid in Saskatoon

What is cottony ash psyllid?

Cottony ash psyllid (CAP) is a non-native pest that is impacting black and mancana ash trees throughout the city. These trees are particularly susceptible to this pest and the combination of dry conditions and an insect infestation can lead to tree loss.

What does cottony ash psyllid look like?

CAP are very small (2.95-3.57 mm), light green to yellow-green pests. Because of their size, the presence of CAP is most easily recognized by the damage they create:

- White cotton curled within or along leaves.
- Heavily infested trees will often be partially defoliated with some of the remaining leaves twisted into a corkscrew or cauliflower shape.

What is the City doing in response to the current CAP outbreak?

In 2017, the City assessed all 7,000 City-owned susceptible ash trees. Of those, approximately 1,000 were identified as having 50% or less leaf cover and were marked and scheduled for removal in 2018. The remaining 6,000 stood a chance of recovering in 2018 if the CAP population declined; however, this did not occur.

An assessment of the remaining City-owned ash trees will begin in July 2018. Trees identified for removal will be marked, recorded in our inventory and a 2019 CAP Response Plan will be taken to City Council for their consideration.

For updates on tree removals in your neighbourhood, visit saskatoon.ca/cottonyashpsyllid.

The tree in front of my neighbour's property was removed and the one in front of my property looks the same, was it missed?

Trees scheduled for removal in 2018 were assessed in 2017 and marked with a green dot on the trunk. If your tree does not have a green dot, it may not have met our 2017 criteria for removal and will be reassessed in 2018.

I had two ash trees in the front boulevard and only one was removed, why?

The current CAP outbreak is an emerging issue and our goal is to preserve as many trees as possible. In 2017, we were hopeful that the CAP population would collapse and that some trees would recover. Unfortunately, the decline of trees has been far more significant and over a shorter time frame than anticipated. We will continue to maintain trees that have healthy foliage and are not clearly declining. However, based on the level of decline over the past year, we have established a more aggressive removal criteria for our 2018 assessment.

Will the City remove the tree and the stump at the same time?

Tree removals and stump grinding are two separate operations that are done at different times. It may take up to two years for stump removal.

The tree in my boulevard is completely dead, will large branches or the whole tree break in the wind?

This is unlikely to occur as the trees have only been in decline for one or two seasons. Most of the impacted trees are not mature and without leaves there is less risk of limb or tree failure.

I don't want to wait for the City to remove the tree in my front boulevard, can I remove it myself?

Not yet. We are currently working on a process that will allow homeowners the option to choose from a list of pre-approved certified and insured tree care companies. If you're interested in paying an approved tree service company to speed up the removal process, watch for updates on saskatoon.ca.

Do I need to request a replacement tree once the tree in my boulevard is removed?

At this time we are considering the resources required for tree replacements and developing a process to manage replacement planting for trees removed as a result of CAP. Until this process is in place, you may submit an online tree request at saskatoon.ca/treerequest.

Do I have to get a replacement tree after mine is removed?

No, at this time you may call us to decline a replacement tree.

Is there anything that can be done to stop this insect from destroying ash trees?

Unfortunately, there is no quick or easy solution to stop this invasive insect. It is moving quickly and there are few proven or effective options for stopping it. Other prairie cities have found that while the investment in chemical controls has slowed its destruction it did not stop the loss of trees. Although certainly devastating, increasing the diversity of our overall forest by replacing these trees with non-ash species will be beneficial in the long term.



cottony ash psyllid



cotton within leaflet



twisted leaf



signs of stress in a row of black ash



stressed black ash in boulevard



saskatoon.ca/cottonyashpsyllid

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