

Pruning Oaks

If you have any oak trees in your yard that you plan to have pruned make sure you do so between November 1st and no later than April 1st to avoid spreading oak wilt disease. Oak wilt is a fungus that is spread via grafted root systems from infected oak trees or overland by sap beetles that are attracted to the scent of freshly cut oaks. Red and pin oaks (pointy leaves) are the most susceptible to oak wilt, whereas white, swamp white and bur oaks (round lobed leaves) have more resistance but are not immune. The high risk period for spreading oak wilt runs from April 1st to July 1st, with a low risk period from July 1st to November 1st, making November through March the safest time for pruning oaks. If you absolutely must prune an oak from April through October make sure to immediately paint over any pruning wounds with latex or acrylic spray paint. The dormant season is actually the best time to prune most tree species since insects and diseases are not active and it is easier to assess branching structure. If you choose to hire an arborist for any tree work the City of Robbinsdale maintains a list of licensed tree contractors, which can be found at <http://www.robbinsdalemn.com/services/forestry>.