

Line Trimmer Damage

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FIG. 1

Type Problem: Plant Disorder

[Plant pathologists usually two causes of plant health problems or diseases into two categories. Some diseases in plants are caused by non-living factors including environmental stress or improper cultural practices. This category of diseases is referred to by a variety of names. The term 'Plant Disorder' is utilized herein. Other equivalent terms and references include 'abiotic diseases', 'physiological disorders', 'non-parasitic diseases', 'non-infectious diseases', and 'non-pathogenic diseases'.

Other plant diseases are caused by a living pathogen (or more than one pathogen including fungi, bacteria, viruses, and nematodes. This category of diseases is referred to by a variety of names including 'biotic diseases', 'parasitic diseases', 'pathogenic diseases', and 'infectious diseases'.]



FIG. 2

Period of Primary Occurrence: throughout lawn/landscape maintenance season

Description

- Damage caused by nylon cord of trimmers used by homeowners and lawn maintenance personnel
- Many homeowners cause more damage to their shade trees through use of line trimmers than insects, disease or poisons



FIG. 3

Description / Symptoms

- Peeling bark around the base of trees
- Exposed inner tissue layers at the injury site
- Die-back of branches
- Weak, sparse leaves on the tree compared to others in close proximity
- Yellowing leaves and general appearance of sickness
- Damage causes a disruption in the flow of water and nutrients up and down tree trunk
- If damage extends around the entire circumference of the trunk, the tree will probably die in a short period of time
- The more damage incurred, the more susceptible tree is to insects and diseases



FIG. 4

- Trees can be completely girdled from microbial attack following injury
- Decay fungi become active on the wound surface and structural deterioration of the woody tissues beneath the wound will often occur

Best Management Practices (BMP)

- Avoid using string trimmers around the base of trees
- Use manual shears to remove grass at base of trees, or pull away by hand several inches from base of tree
- Spread organic mulch 4 – 6" around base of tree to a depth of 3 – 4" to minimize grass and weed growth, replace mulch as needed (do not place mulch up against the tree trunk)



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Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. If the information does not agree with current labeling, follow the label instructions. The label is the law.

Always remember to read and heed six of the most important words on the label: "KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN"

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