

HCV Ordinance for Oak Wilt Prevention and Treatment

Dear Hill Country Village Residents,

Oak Wilt is one of the most destructive tree diseases in Texas. Once Oak Wilt affects an area, the devastation can be enormous. With the loss of the trees themselves also comes loss in landscape and property values, enjoyment of nature, and shade protection for houses and outdoor areas. Some of this devastation has occurred right next to Hill Country Village in the City of Hollywood Park. Oak Wilt has drastically changed properties' appearance and has greatly lowered their values upon resale. Experts agree that Oak Wilt is far more easily and cheaply prevented than treated.

How one resident or business cares for their oaks can easily affect their neighbors. Oak Wilt can spread through the root system of Live Oaks, through cutting tools, or from diseased firewood brought into a neighborhood, among other methods.

In October 2018 HCV residents Liz Worley and Melissa Childers-White attended a Tree Management Workshop sponsored by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, which focused on Texas Oak Wilt. We learned that the current HCV Oak Wilt ordinance has some outdated information and is not full-bodied enough to give us the best protection from Oak Wilt.

Salient proposed changes to our current ordinance include:

1. Tree trimming, whether by a resident or by a commercial tree trimmer, will require a permit. These permits will be free to residents, with a fee to commercial entities.
2. Trimming will not be allowed in the months of February through June, with exceptions for danger to life or property or for previously scheduled construction.
3. The city will place an emphasis on educating residents and preventing Oak Wilt. Please watch for articles in the newsletter and periodic short seminars by a tree professional.
4. The appropriate time frame for sealing/spraying a cut in an oak is half an hour, not one hour.

This ordinance will be up for a vote by City Council in the March 21, 2019, meeting.

If you have questions or concerns as you familiarize yourself with the proposed HCV Oak Wilt Ordinance, you are welcome to call Melissa Childers-White at 210/846-4536.