

Dear Royal Highlands Community,

On **Monday May 16th, 2022**, I surveyed the community for signs of oak wilt. Oak wilt is a disease that is caused by the *Bretziella fagacearum* fungus. This fungus has the capability to infect all oak species. Though this fungus can infect all oak trees, it is important to know that each category of oak (red, white, and live oak) respond differently to this fungus. For more information on the signs and symptoms of oak wilt please visit our website texasoakwilt.org.

Now for the good news about my visit. I did **NOT** find any signs or symptoms of oak wilt in the Royal Highland community. Therefore, there should not be a need for anyone at this time to get their trees tested or have preventative treatment done. It is still recommended to continue practicing proper pruning techniques and pruning timing when it comes to preventing oak wilt. We recommend that you **DO NOT** prune your oak trees from **February to July** when the sap feeding beetle that spreads the fungus is most active. We recommend that any time you prune your oak trees or after a limb breaks off to **immediately** spray the wound with spray paint or pruning spray to cover the wound. We recommend spraying any wound that has a diameter bigger than your finger.

What I **DID** find while visiting the Royal Highland community is signs of winter storm damage. It is important to remember that trees, like humans, are living organisms and respond to stress in different ways. You may have noticed that some of your or your neighbors' trees have new tree limbs and leaves sprouting in areas you have never seen them before. This is the tree's response to winter storm damage and proof that it is trying to recover from the stress it was put through. It is important that during this time you **minimize the amount of stress** on the tree as much as possible. You can do this by not pruning the sprouting limbs and leaves while your tree is trying to recover. I know that these do not always look appealing, but your tree is trying to gather energy from the sun to recover. Also, be sure to not over fertilize or water as this can also stress your trees.

Sincerely,

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