



Oak wilt is a deadly disease that affects all species of oaks found in Minnesota. It is caused by a non-native, invasive fungus (*Bretziella fagacearum*, formerly *Ceratocystis fagacearum*). The fungus invades the water-conducting vessels of oaks, eventually killing infected trees. While the oak wilt pathogen can infect all oak species, those in the red oak group (leaves with pointed lobes) die about two months after infections. Bur oaks die between one and seven years after infection, while white oaks die from one to over 20 years after infection.

Oak wilt infection spreads in two ways: above ground by sap beetles and below ground through roots that have grown together, called root grafts.

# Oak Wilt Fungus

## Protect your woodlands

Oak wilt was discovered in Minnesota around 1945. Today it is widespread in the southern half of Minnesota and continues to expand its range north. To date, oak wilt covers about one-third of the area where most Minnesota oaks grow.





# Oak Wilt Management

## Prevention

Oak wilt can be very expensive to control, but prevention is effective. Avoid harvesting, cutting firebreaks, road construction, and road maintenance in or next to oak stands from about April 1 to July 15.

## Control

Controlling oak wilt involves stopping the disease's underground and above-ground spread. If done correctly, oak wilt can be successfully managed on a property-by-property basis throughout Minnesota, but control might not be appropriate in all circumstances. Controlling oak wilt is easier to accomplish with the assistance of experienced professionals like your local SWCD. They can point out various oak wilt control tactics.

In some cases, cost-share programs for oak wilt control may be available on privately managed forest lands.



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