

RESPONSE TO COUNCILLOR INQUIRY / SUGGESTION

COUNCILLOR LANG

Councillor Lang provided information that the product the Town is spraying on trees is staining the roads and making them slippery and sticky and requested information on the product being used.

Estimated Administrative Time to Respond

Under 4 hours (no motion required)

Over 4 hours (motion required) Estimated Hours: n/a

Motion

n/a

Response

The sticky residue that accumulates under elm trees this time of year is produced by insect pests. In Okotoks, elms are specifically targeted with Woolly Elm Aphid and European Elm scale, which both excrete the sap from the tree that they feed on. This creates a sticky residue that attracts the growth of sooty mold, which make the trunk of the tree and surrounding area turn black.

Okotoks Parks has an annual contract to spray affected Elm trees for European Elm Scale with horticultural (dormant) oil, which is a non-toxic product that coats and suffocates the insects and will also assist with aphids. This treatment is performed when the trees are dormant (after leaf drop or before bud break) and this year the Town will be treating elm trees in the fall after leaf drop.

Pest control is an ongoing maintenance activity and pest eradication is not possible. By controlling insect pests, they are kept at a level that will not threaten killing the tree and to minimize the sap that is dropped.

Administration realizes the sticky sap is a nuisance and a bit unsightly but it will wash off surfaces with soap and water and as precipitation falls down.

Attachment(s)

n/a