

Verticillium Wilt

 **Verticillium is a common fungus that causes wilting of leaves and dieback of branches.**

It affects a number of ornamental and crop plants, particularly maple trees. The fungus germinates in and clogs the tissues moving water through the plant.

What to look for

Sudden wilting of leaves during the growing season is a likely symptom of Verticillium infection. Often, individual branches or a whole side of the plant will exhibit symptoms. The remaining branches of the plant may appear fine.

Wilting may also result from other causes. To help determine if the plant has Verticillium, you can look for streaking in the vascular tissue of affected branches. Discolored streaks strongly indicate Verticillium. But because the fungus is so small, only a tissue test will positively identify Verticillium.


Once infected, a plant with Verticillium may die quickly, or it may survive for many years. Factors limiting the spread in already infected plants are not entirely understood.

What you can do

- Keep turf away from trees. Create a tree ring around existing trees and mulch it. Call us for details.
- Water and fertilizer properly to help prolong the life of infected plants. Avoid overwatering as well as over-fertilizing with nitrogen.
- You can slow the spread of the disease within the plant by completely removing infected branches and disposing of them.

- Sterilize tools with alcohol after each cut to prevent spreading the disease to uninfected parts of the plant or to other plants.
- If you decide to remove diseased plants, be aware that Verticillium spores will remain in the soil for a number of years.
- Do not move soil or plant material from infected areas to unaffected areas.
- Replace severely infected plants with resistant varieties. Look on our web site for a list of plants that are resistant to Verticillium wilt.

What In Harmony can do

- To help keep your trees healthy, we do deep root feeding with mycorrhizae and/or bio-stimulants. 

References

- Verticillium Wilt of Maples. Davidson, R.M. and Byther, R.S. Washington State University Cooperative Extension. <http://www.cahe.wsu.edu/infopub/eb0983/eb0983.html>. November 17, 2000.
- Pacific Northwest Landscape IPM Manual. Bobbitt, V.M., Antonelli, A.L., Foss, C.R., Davidson, R.M., Byther, R.S., and Maleike, R.R. Washington State University Cooperative Extension. 1996.
- Pests of Landscape Trees and Shrubs: An Integrated Pest Management Guide. Dreistadt, S. ANR Publications, University of California. 1994.
- Diseases of Trees and Shrubs. Sinclair, W.A., Lyon, H.H., and Johnson, W.T. Cornell University Press. Ithaca, New York. 1993.

