**Deadly Oak Wilt fungal disease on the rise in Akron trees**

The city of Akron is urging residents to be one the lookout for Oak Wilt, a fungal disease that can kill oak trees. The disease, which mostly affects types of Red Oak trees, including Red, Scarlet, Black and Pin, clogs the vascular cells of the tree by cutting off the water supply from the roots to the leaves--killing the host tree. White Oak tree varieties, including White, Bur and Swamp White are also at risk, but have some resistance against the fungus. (Lyle Nel, Creative Commons 2.0 Generic)

AKRON, Ohio - The city of Akron is urging residents to be on the lookout for Oak Wilt, a fungal disease that can kill oak trees.

The fungal disease has been detected in trees in Akron neighborhoods on the city's north and west sides. Trees can become infected by the fungus through open wounds or broken limbs when spores are spread by insects and animals, or through trees' root systems.

"We want to raise awareness, and inform residents about how to prevent the spread of this rare but deadly disease that can kill a healthy oak tree in a matter of days or weeks," Mayor Dan Horrigan said in a news release.

The disease, which mostly affects types of Red Oak trees, including Red, Scarlet, Black and Pin, clogs the vascular cells of the tree by cutting off the water supply from the roots to the leaves -- killing the host tree. White Oak tree varieties, including White, Bur and Swamp White are also at risk, but have some resistance against the fungus. The warm, wet summer is to blame for the disease's spread, according to city arborist John Malish.

Residents can help stop the spread of the disease by:

* Never voluntarily pruning an oak tree between April 1 and Oct. 1
* Contacting the city at 3-1-1 if a limb breaks on a city-owned tree
* Contacting an ISA-certified arborist to treat privately-owned trees with broken limbs or wounds

The city mailed letters to residents in neighborhoods where the disease caused the removal of oak trees owned by the city. To learn more about Oak Wilt, view the Ohio State University's Oak Wilt fact sheet.

"The spread of Oak Wilt is preventable. By working together, we can avoid the loss of any more of our majestic, neighborhood oaks," Horrigan said in a news release.

To learn more about how to prevent Oak Wilt or report damage to a city tree, contact the Mayor's Action Center at 3-1-1 or 330-375-2311.