



Calaveras County *TREE MORTALITY*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 5, 2016

CONTACT: Sharon Torrence

(209)754-6824

(209)768-0871

Frequently Asked Questions About Our Dead and Dying Trees

A dying tree is a normal occurrence in the natural ecosystem. The difference now however is that the extended drought has caused an abnormally high number—102 million trees and counting in California's forests and wildland-urban interface areas to weaken and become susceptible to native bark beetle infestation. Once a tree is successfully invaded by bark beetles, there is no recovery for the tree and to date there is no known cure.

Healthy trees typically produce enough resinous pitch to repel bark beetles, but beetle populations can flourish among stands of trees stressed by lack of rain and ground water. The beetles and their larvae feed on the tree's living tissue. Beetle damaged trees that fall can take down powerlines, damage homes and fuel wildfire.

Should you have trees on your property that are starting to show signs of dying or have already died, **these trees need to be removed as soon as possible**. The following are answers to a few commonly asked questions:

How dangerous are these trees if they're left standing? Standing dead trees will quickly begin to deteriorate, becoming unstable, and will eventually fall. Dead trees and branches can fall on people, homes, buildings and infrastructure, such as power lines. The sooner a tree is removed the better. The more it deteriorates, the more unstable it becomes.

Is it safe for me to take the dead trees down myself? For larger trees located near houses and other infrastructure, foresters and arborists prefer to remove them in pieces. However, if the tree is too decayed, it becomes unsafe to climb and difficult to predict where it will fall.

What if I don't take them down? How long before the trees become unstable and fall in the winter storms, (snow, rain, wind). The dead trees should be removed as soon as it is practicable to take them down. The longer the dead tree stands the higher the likelihood it could fall and hit your home, vehicle, or a neighbor's property when it. Contact your homeowner's insurance carrier to determine if your property is covered for this type of event, or if your tree lands on someone else's property.

Whose responsibility is it to remove a dead tree? On private property, it is the responsibility of the property owner to remove dead and dying trees. It is recommended that landowners consult with a licensed professional forester or arborist if they are unfamiliar with tree harvesting practices.

For more information, visit the Tree Mortality website at www.butte.calaverasgov.us