

TREE DOCTOR TIPS

Wood-Decay Fungi in the Landscape

DESCRIPTION:

Certain fungi attack multiple species of trees. Mushroom growths, called conks, are seen on the lower portion of the trunk and vary in shape, size and color.

HOSTS:

Wood-decay fungi may be found on multiple hardwood tree species. Most of the common fungi are found on oaks, palms, deciduous trees and sometimes conifers.

BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

Fungal spores released by the conks disperse in the wind and infect other trees through wounds on the trunk or through roots. Disease transmission may occur through soil contaminated with roots from an infected tree. The conks of these fungi vary in color, shape and size, but can all be signs of severe decay that may result in the need of tree removal. Not all fungi create symptoms that are easily recognized above the surface, but some may cause a reduction in crown or indicators below the surface of the bark. In all cases, trees should be regularly tested for soundness of wood.

MANAGEMENT:

Fungicides have not been proven effective in managing these fungi, so prevention is crucial. Minimize or eliminate wounds to the trunk, and if any trees are found infected, removal may be the best option. Consult your arborist for an accurate diagnosis.



FIGURE A. CONK GROWING AT THE BASE OF A WILLOW OAK

FIGURE B. CONK WITH WATER-LIKE EXUDATE

FIGURE C. HONEY FUNGUS FORMING ON TRUNK

*The scientists at **The Davey Institute** laboratory and research facility support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult *The Davey Institute PHC Handbook*.*

