

Snow Storm Damage?

Article Submitted by Stick's Tree Care

In the wake of last week's heavy snow, I would like to offer PID6 readers a glimpse of what we've found on the properties and an idea of what to expect over this coming spring and summer.

As far as the trees go, last summer's 70 MPH windstorm in the PID6 area was a gentle breeze when compared to the limb damage that the Live Oaks, Yaupon Hollies, Wax Myrtles, other evergreen trees, and some deciduous trees suffered last week due to the snowstorm.

Like last summer's windstorm cleanup, we are dealing with breakage of large limbs which are obvious and relatively easy to remove. But, in addition to this vast amount of damage, the Live Oaks also sustained a huge amount of diffuse and scattered damage to medium-sized and smaller branches situated throughout the tree canopies, which will require a great amount of technical repair work by trained climbers over the next few months. We are estimating that 80% of the Live Oaks on PID6-area properties have sustained significant amounts of this scattered micro-damage.

Due to the strain and bending that occurred during the heavy snow accumulation, many of the limbs on these trees have also suffered vascular damage that may not show up until hot weather arrives this summer. Trees damaged in this way will probably be able to keep their leaves green this spring by transporting water through the damaged branches while the weather is cool, but once the thermometer hits the upper 90's, the stressed branches may wilt quickly, due to the vascular disruption. This will show up as what is called "Flagging", which is where you will see a totally brown limb surrounded by perfectly green, healthy limbs.

North Texas gets hit with these wintry-weather events every few years, so we were probably past due for this one. The last snow/ice-damage event of this magnitude on Live Oaks was back in 1983. It's a good reminder, however, to go easy on planting these types of evergreen trees especially Live Oaks in future plantings.