

**DVD & Publication –
"Stem Girdling Roots - Impact, Symptoms & Prevention" (English & Spanish)**

Situation:

Trees play a vital role in our ecosystem. They directly benefit our communities in enhancing the overall quality of life. Unfortunately many of the trees in our communities are planted too deeply, leading to a hidden problem called stem girdling root. Stem girdling root (SGR) is one of the primary stress factors for tree decline in our urban communities. SGR causes structural defects in the tree, ultimately posing a hazardous situation to the property. SGR is preventable at the time of planting. Planting trees at the right depth, exposing the root collar above the ground to about one inch, can prevent the formation of SGR.

The concept of SGR and its prevention is fairly new. In the past 10 years, 14 publications on SGR have been published in scientific journals. Hence, bringing the change in proper tree planting techniques from the century-old traditional practice is a huge task. It involves multi media educational programs and techniques to create awareness among various audiences (landscapers, nursery growers, community members, homeowners and individuals) who are directly involved in the urban landscape. In Northeast Wisconsin, landscape contractors are one of the major work groups who are directly involved in urban landscape design and installation. These firms employ a large section of the Hispanic population in their work force. Therefore, to implement an effective change in the Green Industry, educational outreach media also needs to be tailored in accordance to respective ethnic work group language.

Response:

In 2007-08, the Brown County UW-Extension Horticulture Educator, a UW-Extension media specialist, and the Green Bay chapter of the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors worked together as a team to develop a bilingual DVD on "Proper Tree Planting Techniques". The Educator developed a peer-reviewed manuscript for the video production. After four months of planning, filming began in May 2008 and the English version was officially released at Farm Technology Day on July 15. Currently, both English and Spanish versions of the DVD publication are available at UW Learning Store publication department. The Horticulture Educator has developed a bilingual brochure on proper tree planting techniques to complement the current DVD. This brochure was peer reviewed by various Extension educators and arborists. Also, a general fact sheet on stem girdling root is under peer review. Multiple copies of the DVD, brochure, fact sheet and poster were also produced from the Eastern District Innovative Grant funding source. Twenty-five copies of the bilingual brochure were distributed to each Eastern District agriculture agent. Multiple copies of the brochure were also distributed to the Green Bay chapter of the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors, village foresters, and homeowners.

Result:

A bilingual brochure and DVD publication (in bilingual version) on “Proper Tree Planting Techniques” was produced. A general fact sheet on “Stem Girdling Root Prevention & Treatment” is currently under peer review.

Evaluation:

The impact of these publications will be evaluated in 2009.