



## **Occurrences of evergreens turning orange and red**

### **Have you seen trees turning orange and red?**

Over the past several weeks, you may have noticed a significant number of evergreen trees turning orange and red. Unfortunately, these trees are dead.

The Department of Energy and Resource Development is surveying the impacts of this occurrence of red trees across the province to better understand the extent and severity of the issue.

While small patches of dead trees have been noted in some locations, often they are occurring among individual trees within the forest. These trees are characterized by bright red needles covering the whole tree, or a significant part of the crown.

Both large and small trees are affected, regardless of age, position in the canopy, or the type of soils that the trees are rooted in. Balsam fir are most heavily impacted, however other species of evergreen including eastern white pine and eastern white cedar have also been reported.

We know through discussions with our counterparts in neighboring provinces and states that this is a wide-spread phenomenon ranging from Ontario, Quebec and Vermont through Nova Scotia.

### **What is causing this?**

Insect pests such as the spruce budworm are not the cause of this wave of dead fir trees.

Initial indications are that seasonal weather patterns which have led to drought stress in the forest may be the cause. New Brunswick experienced below average growing season rainfall in 2017 followed by rapid snow melt and high spring wind conditions in 2018. These conditions may have also accelerated secondary stressors such as root rot diseases.

A similar set of environmental conditions were reported in the early 1980's which resulted in many dead fir trees across Central and Eastern Canada.

At the time, the phenomenon was given the label: "Stillwell's Syndrome". The Department is working to identify possible causes for the current phenomenon.



### **What can you do?**

Unfortunately, the damage seems to be done.

The forest will naturally fill the gaps created in the canopy over the next several growing seasons and you may see new trees regenerate in the understory as well.

If you have questions surrounding the management of your woodlot you are advised to contact your appropriate [Forest Products Marketing Board](#).

Members of the public can always report any unhealthy or dead trees they find in the forest that are suspected to have resulted from a forest pest.

Link to report option:

[http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services\\_renderer.201173.html](http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201173.html)

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