

Cheyenne's Harsh Weather Proving Hard on Trees



This Siberian elm has extensive dieback as a result of the dramatic temperature drop we experienced back in November 2014

We are now seeing the effects of the historic cold spell we experienced back in November on our deciduous trees. From November 11-13 we experienced a temperature drop of over 70 degrees. In Denver, they recorded a 77 degree drop which made it the third worst fall freeze in history. Severe freezes in the fall can cause extensive damage to both coniferous and deciduous trees that have not completely hardened-off. Over the winter we saw the obvious effect on our coniferous trees and shrubs as many turned red almost overnight, however we really didn't know what to expect in our deciduous trees. Now that they have leafed-out the damage is becoming very apparent. The tree species that appear to be affected the most include: Siberian elm, ash, cottonwood, boxelder, plum, cherry, mountain ash and crabapple. In each of these species branch dieback is common. Mortality is much less common but appears to be more prevalent with Siberian elm, white ash, plum and cherry.

Since the majority of trees affected only have a few dead branches, pruning the dead branches back to live branches is recommended. Be sure to prune back to a side branch that is at least 1/3 the diameter of the dead

branch being removed. Also if over 1/2 of the crown (the leaf area) is dead, consider removal and replacement instead of pruning. Most trees do not recover when over half of the branches die. Consider hiring an arborist if your tree is large. They have the training, experience and equipment to do this type of work effectively and safely. When choosing an Arborist, be sure they are licensed in Cheyenne. For a list of licensed tree maintenance companies, [click here](#). To download a list of trees recommended for Cheyenne, [click here](#). The *Recommended Trees for Cheyenne* list includes deciduous shade trees and ornamentals that are proven hardy to our climate.