

If You Have Dwarf Mistletoe - What Can You Do?

1. Plant Other Native Trees: Colorado blue spruce - popular is a popular choice but ill-suited to most sites other than those permanently moist. Douglas fir is suitable for cooler, north facing sites with relatively moist soils; may be suitable for drier sites but not guaranteed without some vigilance to maintaining soil moisture. Aspen, cottonwoods and willows. Will thrive in moist soil sites only. While not native, bristlecone and limber pines are occasionally infected and limber pine only rarely.
2. Help infected trees Live Longer: Do not injure tree by cutting or covering roots, or by damaging the bark or by compacting the soil over the root system. **Do water the tree** during dry periods.
3. Spray with Florel: This is the only approved chemical (ethephon gas releasing) that can help. When applied it causes only the exterior growths to fall off, thus eliminating seed production. It does not kill the DM inside the tree. While advertised as having a 2-3 year effect, latest research indicates that it may have to be applied yearly to eliminate seed production. Expect costs beginning at \$90.00 for a single tree. Discounts usually are available for volume in addition to service call charges.
4. Cut Infected Limb: Cut off all infected limbs at the trunk. Once cut, the DM is effectively dead and cannot spread. Pay particular attention to witch's brooms. Follow-up observations in subsequent years usually reveal that a few limbs above and below the cut limb were also infected but only now reveal it. Cutting away more than half the crown seriously compromises the tree. See #5 below.
5. Rub Off the Exterior Growths: Same result as #4.
6. Cut Down the Tree: (ARC approval necessary) dwarf mistletoe dies.
7. Nothing: DM will continue to spread within the infected tree (hastening its demise) and probably to surrounding Ponderosa pines.

** Each Situation is different. Example: an infected, but very valuable tree in the midst of a large group of other infected trees poses little or no harm.