



Ice Storm 1998

Information Sheet #1 March 3, 1998
USDA Forest Service, Durham, NH



How To Determine Percent Live Crown Loss In Hardwoods Before Leaf-Out

This guide will help in assessing the impact of ice damage to hardwood trees. With this initial assessment, consultants and landowners will be able to identify individual trees and stands that need to be revisited after leaves emerge. Determining the consequences of the ice storm will require periodic monitoring of tree response and external indicators of infection such as decay and discoloration fungi.



Tree damage and potential for survival is related to the extent of loss of the live crown.

Discolored and decayed wood that results from wounding and infections will take one to many years to develop. Little additional loss of wood quality is expected in the first year following the damage.

Safety considerations require prompt removal of hazardous trees and branches. Once those are removed, hastiness to harvest other damaged trees may result in more damage to residual trees, leading to decreased timber values over the long term.

(over)



Don't Panic! Stop, Think and Be Patient.

Safety First and Foremost.

Get Professional Advice.



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Percent of Live Crown Loss Ice Damage Severity Categories

Maple Example



35% damage

Less Than 50% Live Crown Damaged

Trees have a high chance of survival. Growth in some trees will slow due to loss of crown. Growth in lightly or undamaged trees on the edges of disturbed areas may increase due to reduced competition.

Birch Example



40% damage

50-75% Live Crown Damaged

Many of the trees will survive with varying degrees of internal infections and growth suppression, depending on where in the crown breaks occur. Outer branch breakage will result in limited infection. Breakage of large tops and/or large lower branches will result in more extensive infection. Shattered branch bases and torn bark increases the chances of infection. These trees will need periodic monitoring.



50% damage



65% damage

Greater Than 75% Live Crown Damaged

Trees have a low chance of survival. Surviving trees will probably become infected. Weigh wildlife habitat potential against any hazardous conditions before removal.



80% damage



75% damage