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**THE NEW** Celebrating 1 Year of Good News!

**SELKIRK** VOL 2 • ISSUE 16

**ENTERPRISE**

\*\*\* Community News for the City of Selkirk & Surrounding Area \*\*\*

# Dutch Elm Vaccine Now Available in Canada

*Guy Shelemy - ISA Certified Arborist*

I'm one of three arborists in Manitoba selected to administer the new Dutch Elm Vaccine for its 2010 commercial launch. I recall how not so long ago, when I would explain my profession to the curious, I used to joke about being a (tree) doctor without a needle - but no longer. This spring, a new chapter is beginning in the fight against Dutch Elm Disease with the recent Canadian regulatory approval of an annually administered vaccine that offers 99% protection after two consecutive years of treatment. While the idea of a vaccine for trees may be new to Canadians, the scientific research behind tree vaccines spans decades beginning in 1930's Europe and the initial discovery of Dutch Elm Disease in Holland.

Interestingly, a tree vaccine shares several properties with those of vaccines for humans. Known under the brand name Dutch-Trig, the vaccine is injected into the cambium (the living bark) of the host tree in the spring while the leaves are beginning to flush out. This elicits a short, yet timely immune response within the tree which offers protection throughout the summer against

the Ophiostoma fungal spores carried by the Dutch Elm Beetle as it forages through elm trees. Only a short vaccination window exists each spring, however and once the leaves have fully flushed out, the opportunity to vaccinate is lost until the following year. As with human vaccines, the Dutch-Trig vaccination is unable to protect elms already infected with the fungus (which may be already present yet undetectable) or root grafted to a diseased elm.

Tree owners interested in establishing a yearly vaccination program for their elms should have healthy trees with no apparent signs of disease. Elms previously treated with fungicide injections (within the past two years) may be considered ineligible as the fungicide residue within the tree kills the living vaccine rendering it ineffective. An examination by a professional arborist can help determine which elms may be suitable candidates for a vaccination program. This year's short supply of the vaccine in Canada and its limited six-week shelf life requires that the vaccine is administered on a first-come, first-serve basis. For more information contact Guy at (204) 334-0127 [www.arboristservices.ca](http://www.arboristservices.ca)



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