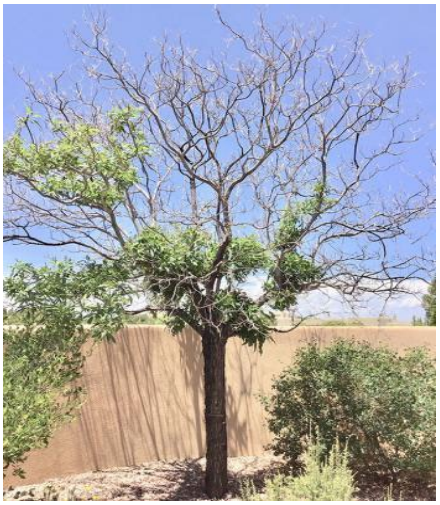
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THE DECLINE OF THE ASH TREE

What we're seeing across the Las Vegas Valley—and what you can do about it





For decades, **ash trees were the shade trees of choice throughout the Las Vegas Valley.** They grew quickly, provided large canopies, and offered much-needed relief from our desert heat. From residential neighborhoods to HOA common areas and commercial properties, ash trees became a defining part of our landscape.

Unfortunately, many of those mature ash trees are now showing signs of decline.

WHY ARE OUR ASH TREES DYING?

There isn't always one single reason. **Extreme summer temperatures, prolonged heat stress, the urban heat-island effect, water restrictions, pests, disease, and the natural aging of mature trees can all contribute to decline.**

One of the most common symptoms we're seeing is **progressive dieback throughout the canopy**. Often, it starts with one or two branches that slowly decline while the rest of the tree still appears healthy. Over time, additional branches begin to die, leaving a thin or uneven canopy.

This can be a frustrating process because the tree may appear to be "hanging on" for several years before its decline becomes obvious.

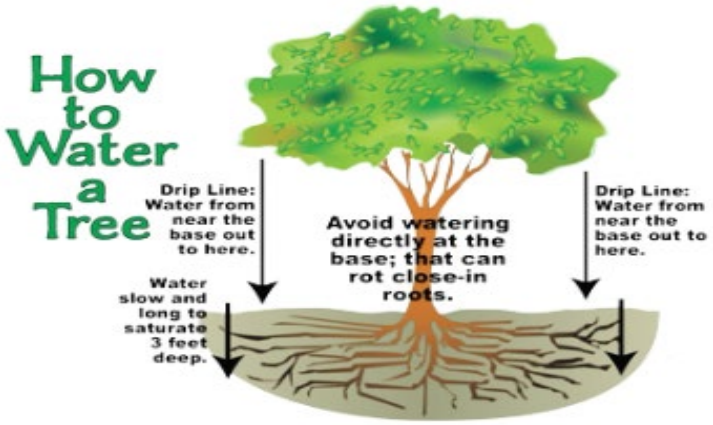
WHAT CAN WE DO?

While there isn't a simple cure that will restore a severely declining ash tree, **proper tree care can help maintain the health and longevity of the tree.**

WATER DEEPLY & PROPERLY

Water is one of the most important tools we have in protecting mature trees in the desert.

Rather than concentrating irrigation directly around the trunk, water should be distributed throughout the **drip line—the area underneath the outer edge of the tree's canopy.** This is where many of the tree's important feeder roots are located.



As landscapes become more water-conscious, it's important to remember that **saving water doesn't mean starving mature trees.** Proper irrigation management means putting the right amount of water in the right place at the right time.

PRUNE WITH A PURPOSE

Removing dead, damaged, or crossing branches can improve the appearance and structure of the tree while allowing more sunlight and airflow into the canopy.

However, pruning should be done carefully. **Removing too much healthy canopy can create additional stress**, particularly during our hottest months.

When working with trees showing signs of decline, pruning tools should also be cleaned between trees as a good sanitation practice.

KNOW WHEN TO LET GO

Sometimes the best thing we can do for a declining tree is recognize when it has reached the end of its useful life.

A tree with significant and continuing canopy loss, extensive deadwood, or structural concerns should be evaluated by a qualified arborist. In some cases, selective pruning can extend the tree's useful life. In others, removal and replacement is the safest and most responsible choice.

LOOKING AHEAD

The loss of mature ash trees is difficult. These trees have provided shade to our communities for decades, and replacing a mature tree isn't as simple as planting a new one.

But this also gives us an opportunity to **build a better and more diverse urban forest.**

Rather than replacing every ash with another ash, we can select a variety of trees better suited to our changing desert environment. Greater diversity helps create landscapes that are more resilient to future pests, diseases, heat and water challenges.

RECOMMENDATION

If you have mature ash trees on your property, don't wait until they're dead to take action.

Have the trees inspected, evaluate the irrigation around the entire drip line, address deadwood appropriately, and begin planning for replacement when decline becomes significant.

The goal isn't simply to save every ash tree. It's to protect the healthy trees we have today while building a stronger, more sustainable urban forest for tomorrow.

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