Trunk Injections – Yes or No?
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Are trunk injections necessary to treat certain tree problems? Do trunk injections wound the tree? Are trunk injections overused by the unschooled practitioner? If you answered yes to all three questions, you are an informed tree owner.

Are trunk injections necessary to treat certain tree problems? Yes, there are a number of treatments that require trunk injections. Macro-infusing elms with Arbotect to prevent Dutch elm disease and oaks with Alamo to prevent oak wilt; FAC iron injections to very chlorotic trees; injecting birch trees that have bronze birch borer; and injecting trees with an insecticide because they cannot be sprayed for one reason or another. These are all good reasons to inject a tree. These types of injections are not done every year, some are done every three to five years, and some are done only once.

Do trunk injections wound the tree? Yes, of course they do, some more than others. There are several different kinds of injection/implant methods available. They all involve drilling, poking or gouging a hole of some size into the tree’s trunk. Injection holes are wounds and are only acceptable when the benefits outweigh the injury.

Injections should be made in the root flare if at all possible because root flare tissue heals faster than trunk tissue. Root flare injections also ensure better dispersal of the material to the crown of the tree.

Are trunk injections overused by the unschooled practitioner? Yes, yes and yes. We see trees being injected multiple times per year, misdiagnosed trees being injected when it’s not necessary, and the physical part of the injections being done improperly. Multiple injections being done year after year will eventually cause so much damage to the tree’s vascular system that the tree might very well die from complications due to the injections. A routine trunk injection of fertilizer into healthy trees is an especially bad practice. Injecting evergreens is another iffy practice because they fill the injection site very quickly with sticky sap, allowing very little material to get into the tree.

You can count on Wachtel’s professional arborists to only prescribe trunk injections to your trees when it is absolutely necessary and for the injections to be done in a correct and proper manner.