Parshall Tree Care Experts: Hemlock Trees May Be Quietly Dying ? Michigan DNR Issues Spring Treatment Alert

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The Michigan Department of Natural Resources issued a public alert on March 31, 2026, urging property owners across Northern Michigan to plan immediately for spring treatment of hemlock woolly adelgid (Adelges tsugae), an invasive insect confirmed in Antrim, Benzie, and Leelanau counties ? the three counties directly surrounding Traverse City and the Grand Traverse region. Parshall Tree Care Experts, a Traverse City-based ISA-certified arborist company serving the region since 2008, is echoing that warning and encouraging local homeowners to inspect their hemlock trees without delay.

Hemlock woolly adelgid is a small, sap-feeding insect native to Asia that attaches to the undersides of hemlock branches and extracts nutrients directly from the tree's needle tissue. According to the Michigan DNR, without treatment, infested trees will die within four to ten years. The insect does not discriminate between residential landscape trees and forest hemlocks ? it threatens Michigan's estimated 170 million hemlock trees statewide, according to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The DNR notes that the pest can spread via wind, wildlife, and vehicles parked beneath infested trees, making containment in densely populated and highly trafficked areas like Traverse City particularly challenging. Learn

more at https://pr.portlandtribune.com/article/Parshall-Tree-Care-Experts-Warns-Pruning-Red-Oaks-After-April-15th-Could-Be-a-Death-Sentence-to-Trees?storyId=69b4a48fd59ff000029cb3f1.

"Many homeowners have no idea their hemlock trees are under threat until significant damage has already occurred," said a Parshall Tree Care Experts spokesperson. "The warning signs are subtle ? a yellowing or grayish-green needles, canopy thinning, and small white cottony masses on the undersides of branches." By the time most people notice, the infestation is well-established. Spring treatment is the most effective intervention available, and the window to act is now."

The DNR identifies two systemic insecticide treatments ? imidacloprid and dinotefuran ? as effective options for combating hemlock woolly adelgid. According to the Michigan DNR, imidacloprid moves slowly through trees and offers protection for at least four years per application, while dinotefuran acts more rapidly and is particularly suited for heavily infested trees, providing one to two years of protection. Peer-reviewed research published in the Journal of Integrated Pest Management confirms that both neonicotinoids are appropriate for landscape use and represent the primary chemical management tools available for HWA suppression, with selection depending on infestation severity and tree size. The DNR advises that soil treatments be applied between early April and late October, once ground temperatures have thawed and soil moisture is moderate ? making the current spring window the ideal treatment period.

The treatment advisory arrives on the heels of two consecutive destructive March ice storms that battered Northern Michigan in 2025 and again in mid-March 2026. Tree health professionals note that storm-stressed trees with compromised root systems and fractured limbs are measurably more vulnerable to invasive pest infestations, as the tree's natural defenses are diminished.

The same resilience that defines Northern Michigan's trees is reflected in how Traverse City residents relate to them. Amy McIntire's Google Review, a Traverse City-area homeowner who recently relied on Parshall Tree Care Experts following this winter's storm damage, described her experience:

"We had a stunning old tree in our front yard. About 90' tall and probably over 100 years old. We had Parshall clean her up last year, and this winter was just too hard on her, so she needed to come down. Every storm that has come through, we have held our breath in fear of what that tree could do to our house. About 3 weeks ago, we turned around and could see the crack that extended about 4' down - we called Parshall that day, Matt came out and confirmed our suspicions that it was bad. The quote was fair and informative. They were here this Wednesday - it took all day but the crew (I regret not getting their names) was efficient, took time to explain what they were doing, left us the chips and few other logs that we requested! Watching

Parshall take down a tree is like watching a carefully scripted ballet or surgery - We will never use anyone else except Parshall for our tree care!"

Property owners in the Grand Traverse region who have eastern hemlock trees on their property are encouraged to inspect branches for the presence of small, round, white ovisacs near the base of needles ? the primary visual identifier of hemlock woolly adelgid infestation. The Michigan DNR recommends consulting a qualified arborist for assessment and treatment planning, particularly for large or heavily infested trees where professional-grade trunk injection methods may be more effective than consumer soil drench applications.

About Parshall Tree Care Experts: Parshall Tree Care Experts is a Traverse City, Michigan-based tree care company offering ISA-certified arborist services to residential and commercial clients throughout the Traverse City and the Grand Traverse region. Services include tree removal, seasonal pruning, storm damage response, and preventive pest and disease treatment. For scheduling and consultations, visit https://parshalltreecare.com.

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Parshall Tree Care Experts

Parshall Tree Care Experts of Traverse City, MI are expert professional pest control services in Grand Traverse County, MI. Specializing in tree removal, pruning, maintenance, stump grinding, round-the-clock emergency responses, and expert tree consulting

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