



South Dakota  
Department of Agriculture  
**Division of Resource Conservation & Forestry**

## Problems with Eastern Red Cedar 2013

By  
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**Photo by Nathan Kafer**

The eastern red cedars to most people are the superman of trees. Cedars seem impermeable in most areas, but things have changed this year.

Due to the last three years of environmental conditions, most trees are stressed. Stressed trees even cedars, have insects and diseases that can emerge and eventually kill trees. These insects and diseases are secondary attackers that have emerged more this year due to the past two years of high moisture, dry winters, and drought. Secondary attackers are usually, but not always, present on the trees. However, if trees are stressed, they emerge and start to affect the trees in a negative way. With the eastern red cedar trees, there are two main secondary attackers, Cedar Bark Beetle and Juniper Blight.

The cedar bark beetle attacks both rocky mountain juniper and eastern red cedar. The symptoms include individual twigs wilting, dying, and breaking off. Occasionally, this can affect the entire tree. You will also see small holes on the trunk of the trees with galleries beneath the bark. Galleries are passages carved out under bark or in wood by insects feeding or laying eggs.

The control for cedar bark beetle is removal and burning of infested branches or trees. In addition, you can treat by applying an insecticide labeled for bark beetles with the active ingredients Carbaryl or Permethrin by early June. You need to treat the trunk and all branches that are one inch or larger.



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Another disease problem is juniper blight, which has one of three types of fungi. Juniper blight is either a *Phomopsis* fungi, *Cercospora* fungi, or *Kabatina* fungi.

*Cercospora* symptoms occur in the late summer with the oldest needles on the lower inside branches turning bronze or red and the symptoms are limited to needles. *Phomopsis* and *Kabatina* fungi affect shoot tips, which turn yellowish brown to red and then eventually become brown. *Kabatina* symptoms occur on new growth in April and May with the brown tissue dropping in June. *Phomopsis* symptoms occur during the growing season from May to September.

Control for the *Cercospora* fungi is applying the active ingredient, Copper, three times once in mid-June, early July, and mid-July. However, *Cercospora* is not a common disease.

*Phomopsis* fungi treatment is with the active ingredient Copper or Propiconazole at 14-day intervals beginning in mid-May and continuing until the growing ceases or dry weather begins. There is not an effective control for *Kabatina* fungi as it will enter through a wound, and infection occurs in the autumn. With juniper blight, it is recommended to have a professional look at your trees to obtain the correct diagnoses. Samples may need to be sent in for diagnoses confirmation.



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With most tree problems, prevention is best policy. However, when it comes to environmental issues, not much can be done. Nevertheless, watering and mulching your trees will give them a better chance of staying stress free and healthy.



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