

Winter 2006-7

ArborVisor

2006 In Review



A Publication of Mountain High Tree Care & Consulting
3450 Astrozon Place, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910
Phone 719-444-8800 • Fax 719-630-3209 • Website: mountainhightree.com

Tree Care in Colorado—

Growing up in Minnesota, I was in awe of the trees that withstood long, cold harsh winters. After moving to Colorado in 1982, I discovered an entire new environment that trees have to withstand.

Each year since my arrival has been different from every other. I have seen 70 degrees in January and snow in May. I witnessed the wettest year in Colorado Springs with resultant flooding, and blizzards that drop several feet of snow. I have experienced one of the driest years on record, the Hayman Fire burning in our “backyard” and the eerie sound of dry Chinook winds that have reached 90 miles per hour.

Colorado Springs is in a semi-arid climate. It is dry, but not a desert and can be cold. We are at the edge of the Great Plains where trees don't natively grow except along waterways. This all means, we need to plant and tend our Colorado trees.

Colorado's extremes and subsequent insect, disease and abiotic problems keep Mountain High hopping to care for your trees. If you would like a yard check, an estimate for winter pruning, or other tree care, please call or email us.

Your business is appreciated and your referrals are invaluable.

Colorado, a Wonderful Place to Live,



The WACKY WORLD of Weather in 2006

Colorado Springs received almost no precipitation between January 1 and July 1 of 2006. The hillsides and native areas were bone dry. Grasses remained dormant, the soil cracked. Native mountain mahogany put out very minute leaves. Flowering trees did not flower. Some trees could not flush leaves at all. Some died, receiving too much too late and others it remains to be seen.

Then as July came the monsoon season set in and Colorado Springs received its normal precipitation plus some. By August the mountain mahogany had leafed out fully. New growth flushed on native pines and scrub oak as well as the trees and shrubs in our landscapes.



This snowstorm in September of 1875 is similar to Colorado Springs' storms on October 18 and October 26. Courtesy Colorado College.

Fall brought 2 heavy wet snows, on October 18 and on October 26. Elms and maples still in leaf suffered major limb breakage.

2006 ended with a pounding from back to back blizzards. For trees though dormancy brings relief and the ability to withstand cold and snow.



Caring for Trees in Colorado



Caring for trees in Colorado is about preparing them to withstand drought, high winds, heavy wet snows, and temperature fluctuations.

Pruning - Pruning begins with young trees, developing a good structure to withstand storms. As trees mature maintenance pruning is needed to reduce weighted branching and clean out dead, broken and diseased branching. Repairing stubs and branch tears is important for storm-damaged trees to reduce the risk of decay and disease.

Insect and Disease Control - Control of insects and pathogens is important in Colorado. Maintaining healthy green foliage and photosynthetic function is important for compartmentalization and repair. This requires control of leaf feeding insects, damaging scale insects and fungi that affect leaves. Drought and storm damage can make trees more prone to bark beetles and borers, requiring the appropriate protective sprays.

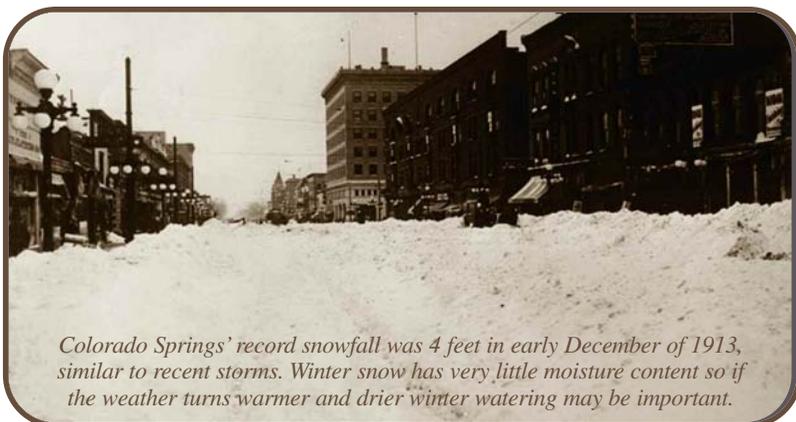


Repairing stubs and branch tears is important to reduce the risk of disease and decay.

Fertilization and Root Treatments – Colorado soils are thin and often lack the nutrients and organic matter needed for tree growth. Fertilization provides the basic nutrients used for important physiological processes. Often younger trees and those with stressed root systems require supplemental nutrients. Cambistat® is a soil-applied plant growth regulator that has the ability to compact and reduce the growth of trees that are growing in tight spots. It also increases the density of absorptive roots that can be important for stressed trees.

Lightning Protection – Colorado Springs is noted for its lightning. Many large and exposed trees are at greatest risk. Mountain High can install lightning protection in your key trees.

Winter Watering – Winter is Colorado Springs driest season. Many of the trees in our landscapes are adapted to regions with more winter moisture so supplemental watering in the winter is one of the best treatments for your trees. We use a soil probe attached to our tank truck and can effectively get water deeply into the soil where the roots are located.



Colorado Springs' record snowfall was 4 feet in early December of 1913, similar to recent storms. Winter snow has very little moisture content so if the weather turns warmer and drier winter watering may be important.

Working with and maintaining your landscape is a continuing and long-term process. Mountain High can help you in caring for your trees and planning for your landscape. Give us a call at 444.8800.

What We Saw in 2006



Black Walnut Twig Beetles

A repercussion of drought has been the decline or death of almost all the black walnut trees in town. It appears that a combination of factors may be responsible, but in each case the twig beetle has been present in high numbers. If you have a black walnut tree please give us a call about recommended care.

Banded Elm Bark Beetle . . .

A new elm bark beetle, native to Russia and China was detected in Colorado in 2003. This very aggressive beetle attacks drought stressed elms and feeds in healthy trees. It has proven to carry the Dutch elm disease fungus just like the European elm bark beetle.

Mountain High continues to recommend a complete care program for American elms which includes a bark beetle protective spray, soil injection for elm scale every 2-3 years, regular maintenance pruning and monitoring for Dutch elm disease.



Mountain High recommends a complete care program for American Elms.



More on Beetles

Bark beetle epidemics continue to devastate the forests in Colorado's High Country. Warm winters, aging forests and a build-up of beetle populations are contributing factors to these epidemics.

An epidemic of mountain pine beetle is also occurring in ponderosa pine up Ute Pass. Mountain High tries to keep up-to-date on what is happening elsewhere to be better prepared to take care of your trees.

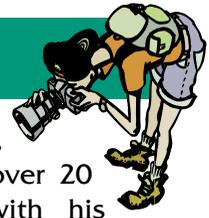


Colorado's High Country is losing large areas of lodgepole pine, fir and spruce to beetle epidemics.



In a year of extremes, normal seasonal needle drop in pines, spruce and fir was abundant.

Employee Highlights



James, one of our trim foremen, has worked in the industry for over 20 years. He started climbing with his fathers's tree company in Florida. He has been with Mountain High for 2 years. He is an excellent technical climber with skills for difficult jobs. When not working in trees he can be found working on his '65 Pontiac Lemans. James and Dawn live in Briargate.

Chris, our Assistant Spray Supervisor, has been with Mountain High for 3 years. He is a Colorado Springs native and graduated from Cheyenne Mountain High School. Besides his dedication to his job, Chris enjoys drawing, playing the guitar and getting out with his dogs. Chris and Liz live in the Shooks Run area of Colorado Springs amongst the big trees.



Forest Health Management and Fire Mitigation

A reality of living in Colorado is drought and wildfire. Much of Colorado Springs is in the wildland interface, an area prone to wildfire. Decades of fire suppression in areas naturally adapted to low intensity fires have caused an overgrowth of the forest.

In 2004, Mountain High under Becky's leadership, researched, surveyed, and wrote a forest health management plan for North Cheyenne Cañon and Stratton Open Space. In 2006, Mountain High was selected by the City to begin implementation of that plan. The goal was a reduction of fuels through the selective removal of dead, lateral, poor structure and overcrowded scrub oak, pine and fir.

Mountain High can provide forest health management and fire mitigation for your property. **Call 444.8800**

Before picture in Cheyenne Canon



The goal of fire mitigation is the reduction of fuels through the selective removal of dead, lateral, poor structure and overcrowded scrub oak, pine and fir.

After picture in Cheyenne Canon



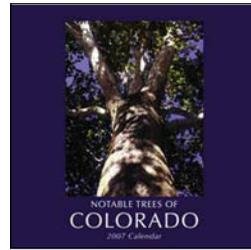
Mountain High can help in managing your property for health and fire.



In 2006, Mountain High accomplished 2 large forest health projects, the one in Cheyenne Cañon and one in the Black Forest.

2007 Notable Trees of Colorado Calendar

Mountain High continued as a sponsor of the 2007 Notable Trees of Colorado Calendar. Becky Wegner again chaired the committee for the Colorado Tree Coalition that created this colorful and informative calendar with photographs of champion and notable trees in Colorado. February features an American Elm in Monument Valley Park south of the old Van Briggie Pottery.



If you love trees or want to learn more about them, this is a calendar for you. Call our office for a free calendar or check out the Colorado Tree Coalition web site at www.coloradotrees.org



Mountain High is also proud to be a sponsor of the Old Northend website at www.oldnorthend.org.



Elm Leaf Miner

What's New for 2007

Elm Leaf Miner – For the last few years in early summer this insect has been devastating to elms causing browning and dropping leaves. In 2007 we will be proposing an early summer application to minimize damage from this pest.

White Pine Weevil – In 2007 besides the spring protective spray, we will propose fall soil injection to many of our customers. This will be a 2-year control to minimize your cost and our visits.



White Pine Weevil

Spider Mites – Hot and dry conditions last summer caused many spider mite problems. They have become a difficult pest to control, thus Mountain High will be trying some new and varied controls for this pest.



2007 Proposals



Look for your proposals in the mail in late January.

We will strive to recommend the services your landscape needs.

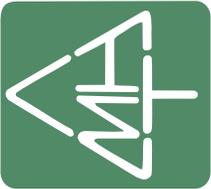
Please let us know if you have any concerns or if there is something you want included for the coming year.

What Mountain High Does –

- Complete Tree & Shrub Care
- Quality Pruning & Shearing
- Removals & Stump Grinding
- Insect & Disease Controls & Sprays
- Consulting
- Organic wood mulch
- Lightning Protection
- Fertilization
- Deep Root Watering
- Forest Management
- Fire Mitigation
- Construction Mitigation



Please call us at 719.444.8800 for information and estimates or email us at beckywegner@mountainhightree.com.



MOUNTAIN HIGH

Tree Service, Inc.

3450 Astrozon Place
Colorado Springs, CO 80910
(719) 444-8800

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