

Assessing Tree Damage

Before clearing your landscape of fire-damaged trees, check to see if they will recover. Native California trees have several adaptations that help them survive, or recover quickly from fire damage. If a tree does not pose an immediate hazard to health or property, provide it with an opportunity to recover.

Cut Hardwoods when...

1. The **cambium is completely dead** around the base of the tree. To check, cut small openings in the bark to expose the cambium layer underneath.

Surviving trees have **Pink, Moist, and light colored wood under the bark**

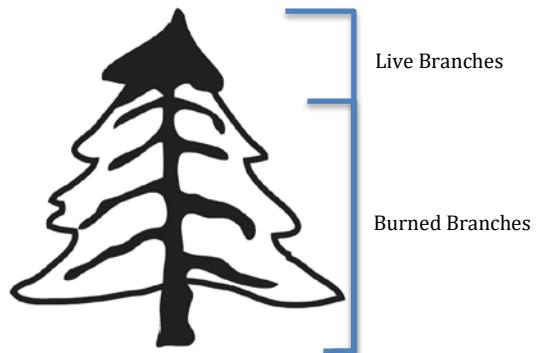


Dead trees will have **Brown, Dry, dark colored wood under the bark**

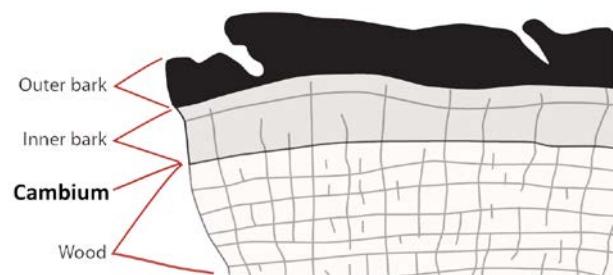
2. Unlike conifers, **Oaks can survive** even when all the foliage has burned off. The tree may even produce new foliage this year.
3. If the trunk has been killed, many oaks will **resprout from the roots** in the spring. Root sprouts grow much faster than new shoots from acorn plantings.

Cut Conifers when....

1. The tree is small (< 6 inches in diameter) and the bark is charred or exposed **continuously around the base**.
2. Less than **25% of the crown remains green** on the tree. *Conifers* only produce one set of foliage each year whereas oaks can potentially re-leaf after a fire.



3. If uncertain, check if the cambium is moist. A slow burning fire may leave the foliage green, but kill the live cambium tissue of the tree.



For more information about tree damage and recovery, contact your Shasta County [CE Forest Advisor \(530.224.4900\)](#) or [Master Gardeners \(530.242.2219\)](#)