Chemical vs. Organic:

When working with trees, it does not take long before one comes across a pest problem that can be handled in only one way—with chemicals. While some people prefer organics in hope that the more natural chemicals will have less of an impact to the surrounding environment, others prefer chemical-based sprays and injections because of chemicals’ greater strength. And with so many arguments for either chemical or organic compounds, a good knowledge of the difference between the two is always the key to choosing which is right for you.

When we’re honest about it, chemicals are undoubtedly stronger and more successful in removing pests, especially in the short term. They can quickly eliminate problems of anything from fungus to bark beetles, normally requiring only one or two applications. This is not to say that organics do not work; they do. When using organic chemicals, many applications are often necessary, sometimes taking up to five or more years to deal with a problem that would only take ten minutes for chemicals to solve.

However, organics are definitely the better choice when concerned with the surrounding environment. Many organic chemicals are able to be applied to areas where traditional chemicals would create more problems than they would solve. Some chemicals can pose as a hazard for nearby landscaping, ponds, or pets, while weaker organic chemicals have little effect on anything but their target. This is why it is important to know what type of chemical—organic or traditional—that you are applying. Many chemicals are known to be nonselective, meaning that they will kill nearly every type of insect on the tree. When this occurs, many beneficial organisms can be destroyed, which could lead to new problems. Selective chemicals, which can be either organic or traditional chemicals, are much safer to use when beneficial organisms are involved.

Whenever dealing with any type of chemical or organic substance, an arborist can always help. Trained to identify which chemicals can best rid your trees of pests, arborists can provide selective or nonselective chemicals that best suit your needs.

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