



# KEVIN L. SCIBILIA

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Southampton Shade Tree Commission  
c/o Mr. Doug Melegari  
5 Retreat Road  
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On September 27, 2015, I inspected three trees on Buddtown Road and one on Retreat Road that had died recently.

The first tree at 6 Buddtown Road is an 18" diameter at breast height (DBH) sweetgum. It is exhibiting classic signs of scorch and I suspect strongly that bacterial leaf scorch is the cause of the tree's death. Bacterial leaf scorch is a disease of the water conducting elements of the tree that plugs those elements and causes the tree to become water stressed. Symptoms are leaves that brown from the outer margins in the drier months of the year. Over time, the tree dies from the outer branches in toward the center. There is no "cure" for this disease. Treatments of streptomycin can prolong the life of the tree but is not cost effective for any trees other than high-value specimen trees.

The second tree located at 4 Buddtown Road is a 4" DBH Norway maple. This does not appear to have died from bacterial leaf scorch. There is no evident reason for the death of this tree but I suspect that the problem is underground in the roots. The tree died rather quickly possibly from massive girdling roots just under the surface. There were no girdling roots observed on the surface but maples are prone to girdling roots than can kill the tree.

The third tree is a multi-stem sweetgum between 2 and 4 Buddtown Road with stems ranging in size from 6-8" DBH. Like the first tree, this is exhibiting classic symptoms of bacterial leaf scorch.

The fourth tree is a 24" DBH pin oak between 2 baseball fields at the municipal building on Retreat Road. This tree is also exhibiting classic bacterial leaf scorch.

Buddtown Road Assessment  
October 7, 2015

## **Recommendations**

There are tests for bacterial leaf scorch but their sensitivity diminishes once the tree has died. I would question the necessity of a test for the disease. It is endemic throughout the species of pin oak, red oak and sweetgum. Some individual trees within these species are resistant to the disease and some are highly susceptible. The best treatment is to plant a variety of species avoiding the three noted above. There are many hosts to bacterial leaf scorch but my observations lead me to believe that pin oak, red oak and sweetgum are by far the most affected species in this region.

Should you have any questions on any aspects of this report, Please contact me for clarification.

Respectfully submitted,

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