

***Fatal Palm Disease-Heading Our Way!
Texas Phoenix Palm Decline (TPPD):***



Texas Phoenix Palm Decline (TPPD) is a new disease in Florida. This disease is caused by a unculturable bacterium that has no cell wall. Texas Phoenix Palm Decline is a fast systemic disease that kills palms relatively quickly.



In early 2008, this second phytoplasma disease was confirmed as the cause of declining Cabbage Palm in Hillsborough and Manatee counties. The disease is known as Texas Phoenix Palm Decline because it was originally discovered in the southern coastal region of Texas.

Like lethal yellowing disease, TPPD is spread by a sucking insect which has yet to be identified. This could get really ugly when you consider the abundance of cabbage palms in our natural areas. Hopefully there is only a small portion of the cabbage palm population that is susceptible!

Symptoms:



The first obvious TPPD symptom on mature palms is premature fruit drop of all or most of the fruit in a short period. The next symptom is discoloration of the foliage, beginning with the oldest leaves. The leaves do not turn yellow (or do so briefly), but quickly turn varying shades of reddish-brown to dark brown or gray. The discoloration begins at leaf tips. In cabbage palms approximately two-thirds of the oldest leaves will have discolored before the spear leaf dies. Once the spear leaf has died, no new leaves will develop, and the remaining green fronds will continue to discolor from the oldest to the youngest leaves. In some instances, by the time the spear leaf dies, mature roots of the palm at or near the soil surface are soft in texture and easily broken. The palm can be easily rocked back and forth in the ground because the root system is decaying.