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Don't Give Up Just Yet

Saturday, September 8th, 2012

Recent widespread rain, in fairly decent quantities, indicates that this summer's drought may finally be broken. However, it will be several weeks; maybe even through October, before we'll know if the drought has really killed some of the trees that appear to be dead. So.....don't be too hasty in removing those trees that appear to be dead without first checking them to be sure.

I have an American arborvitae in my yard that seems to have succumbed to the dry weather. The needles are totally brown all the way from the top to the base of the stem. The poor thing looks really sad. However, I checked it just the other day, and I found that some of the twigs were quite limber, and had living cells under the bark when I carefully peeled back a very small section or two. In addition, the brown needles are not falling off as quickly as they might if the twigs and branches were completely dead and dried out. I even stepped back and thought I saw a glimmer of green here and there, especially within the interior of the crown where there was some shading during the very hot times experienced in June and July. Maybe I'm too optimistic, but I see a glimmer of hope that my arborvitae might recover once cooler weather sets in for good.....AND we continue to make up some of our water deficits.

Fortunately, there is no need to rush out and "take care" of a tree that might make a "miraculous" recovery. I plan to wait until next spring and see if my arborvitae leafs out. There is no need to remove it and replant this fall. That can always be done in the spring, if the tree doesn't recover. A tree planted this fall may not survive, nor grow as well (if at all) if the dry weather persists into the winter. We'll have a much better idea of what the conditions will be by late March, and a removal/replacement decision can be made then, without potentially wasting the cost of planting a tree this fall; which might not survive anyway.

So.....don't give up just yet. If you have a tree that looks dead, but you're not sure, check it more closely and/or get some professional advice from a local arborist, forester, or nurseryman concerning what and how to check it out.

REMEMBER – TIME IS ON YOUR SIDE!

Good luck.

EXPERTS AGREE

DON'T

TOP YOUR

TREE