

Douglas-fir Beetle and MCH Fact Sheet
Helena National Forest, 2007

Q: Should I consider MCH for my property?

A: It depends! Ask yourself these questions first:

1. Do I have large Douglas-fir trees on my property?

The trees most at risk are those that are over 14" diameter, spaced densely, and surrounded by other Douglas-fir trees. Trees in stands with mixed species or spaced out by themselves are not in as much danger.

Ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, and other species are NOT in danger from the Douglas-fir beetle, although different insects do infest these trees. MCH will not help protect these other species.

2. Am I connected to other forested areas?

Douglas-fir beetles move from tree to tree, so if your property is not adjacent or close to large expanses of trees, such as National Forest Land, the risk of infestation is low. Areas near disturbances such as fires are at higher risk because beetle populations build up in stressed trees. Properties in the middle of town for example would have essentially no risk from Douglas-fir beetle.

3. Am I already seeing Douglas-fir beetle activity or mortality in my trees?

Douglas-fir beetle attacks result in reddish boring dust collecting in the crevices on the bark of the tree, sometimes pitch "streamers" higher in the tree, and then needles turning yellow, then red, then falling off. A tree may still be green and essentially be dead if it has multiple "hits" indicated by the reddish dust.

Q: How do I apply MCH?

A: See the attached instruction sheet. If you want to protect a few individual trees, one or two capsules per tree should be enough. If you want to protect a larger area, generally 30 capsules per acre are needed.

Q: What if I don't have the Douglas-fir beetle but have other problems with my trees?

A: Consider consulting with private forestry companies, the Montana DNRC, county extension offices, etc. for site visits and advice on your trees. The Forest Service might also be able to help answer questions.