



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

HENRY & STARK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

4424 US Hwy 34, Kewanee, IL 61443
Phone: 309-852-0197 Fax 309-852-3115
www.henrystarkhealth.com



TREES & SEPTIC SYSTEMS



Tree root invasion of septic tank absorption fields, drop boxes, and tanks is a long standing problem in the maintenance of on-site treatment systems. Many trees and shrubs readily invade these systems because they can provide air space, water and nutrients. Not all trees and shrubs invade septic systems. Listed here are a number of species and likelihood of their roots invading septic systems. The list is not exhaustive but includes those plants for which there is reliable information.



COMMON NAME	LATIN NAME
Trees with Roots Commonly Invading Septic Systems	
Boxelder	Acer negundo
Red Maple	Acer rubrum
Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum
Red Cedar	Juniperus virginiana
Cottonwood	Populus deltoides
Weeping Willow	Salix alba Tristis
Peachleaf willow	Salix amygdaloides
Corkscrew Willow	Salix matsudana Tortuosa
Black Willow	Salix nigra
American Elm	Ulmus americana
Siberian Elm	Ulmus pumila
Slippery Elm	Ulmus rubra
Trees with Roots Rarely Invading Septic Systems	
Norway Maple	Acer platanoides
Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum
White Ash	Fraxinus Americana
Green Ash	Fraxinus pennsylvanica
Red Pine	Pinus resinosa
White pine	Pinus Strobus
White Oak	Quercus alba
Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa
Red Oak	Quercus rubra
Shrubs with Roots Commonly Invading Septic Systems	
Gray Dogwood	Cornus racemosa
Red-osier Dogwood	Cornus stolonifera
Autumn Olive	Elacagnus umbellate
Forsythia	Forsythia spp.
Common Buckthorn	Rhamnus cathartica
Pussy Willow	Salix discolor
Sandbar Willow	Salix interior



Credit to Morton Arboretum