Needles Are Dropping From Pines

This is the time of year when natural needle drop on pine, spruce and various other needled evergreens occurs. This is a process where two to four-year-old interior needles turn yellow, then brown and eventually drop off.

Those that aren't familiar with this process are often concerned about the health of the tree. This is a natural phenomenon that occurs every year and does not hurt the tree. Since this only affects older, interior needles, the tips of the branches should look fine. However, be sure to check that only the older needles are affected. There should not be spotting or banding on the needles that are turning yellow. If spotting or banding is noted, take a sample to your local K-State Research and Extension office for diagnosis.

Natural needle drop is often more severe on trees that have been stressed by heat or drought and is more noticeable some years than others.

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