

# We Speak For The **TREES**



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## Tree Tips

### TREE CARE TIPS

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Now is a great time to do a few things around the landscape that will help you get off to a good start with tree maintenance and disease prevention. It's an excellent time to do a bit of pruning to remove any dead or dying branches that may be on the tree and left over from last year. These branches can be an important source for disease organisms for the upcoming season. Microorganisms often spend the winter in dead wood, removing this material may help reduce disease incidence. Always be sure to follow safety guidelines and wear appropriate protection when doing pruning activities. Although pruning can be done during most times of the year, winter pruning offers several advantages to the homeowner. Branches are easy to see and there are few

to no leaves to have to deal with.

Be sure to also inspect the crown, trunk and branches for any apparent decay or damage. These may be evidences of potential failure. Raking up all of those leaves that have fallen during the winter is useful as well. Collect and burn if allowed in your community. If not allowed, just bag them and put on the street for utility pickup. This is a very effective way to destroy potential sources of many diseases that can attack the leaves the next spring, particularly if we have a lot of rainfall during the early months of spring.

Planning any construction projects around the home that involve excavation? Now is good time to start planning a protection zone for those majestic landscape trees that might factor into the project. Typically this protection zone distance is 1.0 or 1.5 times the trunk diameter of the tree and is measured from the tree in all directions, creating a circle to protect the root zone. Also, be sure to avoid stacking construction materials in this zone, since soil compaction can lead to tree stress.

Bark damage from construction equipment can be a death sentence. These wounds provide an entry point for many decay organisms that can jeopardize tree health and safety. Homeowners should make a special effort to avoid wounding of the tree.

A great resource to check out is the Tree Owners Manual created by the USDA Forest Service for the Northeastern and Midwestern United States. Much of the content is applicable for our geographic region and contains everything from proper planting to regular maintenance schedules. It can be found at <http://na.fs.fed.us/urban/treeownersmanual/>

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