

**REPORT OF THE  
VIRGINIA BOARD OF COMMERCE ON**

**The Need for  
Certification of Arborists**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 5**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND  
1990**



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Commerce

Board of Commerce

DAVID R. HATHCOCK  
Director

3600 WEST BROAD STREET, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23230-4917

LOIS S. MILLER, Ed.D.  
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W. RANDY WRIGHT  
Vice Chair

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HELEN HATAB SAMHAN  
CHESTER DALE STANLEY

September 28, 1989

TO: The Honorable Gerald L. Baliles  
Governor of Virginia  
and  
The General Assembly of Virginia

The report transmitted herewith is pursuant to House Joint Resolution 263 of the 1989 Session of the General Assembly of Virginia. This Resolution requested the Board of Commerce to study the need for certifying arborists and submit its findings and recommendations to the 1990 Session of the General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lois S. Miller'.

Dr. Lois S. Miller  
Chairman

Enclosure

BOARD OF COMMERCE REPORT  
ON THE NEED FOR  
CERTIFICATION OF  
ARBORISTS

Arborist Study  
Subcommittee Members:

Dr. Lois S. Miller  
Ms. Helen Hatab Samhan

VIRGINIA BOARD OF COMMERCE  
REPORT ON THE REGULATION OF  
ARBORISTS

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- I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
  - A. Study Overview
  - B. Key Findings
  - C. Conclusions
  - D. Recommendation

## I. Executive Summary

### A. Study Overview

This study was initiated as a result of HJR 263 to determine the need for certifying arborists in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Board of Commerce through the means of survey data, a public hearing and written comments, reviewed the nature of the occupation, its unregulated effect on the public, the alternatives to state regulation, and the effectiveness of other state regulatory programs for arborists.

The level of regulation recommended by the Board is based on an extensive analysis of this information.

### B. Key Findings

1. The search for complaints against arborists revealed little evidence of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare.
2. The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture has recently initiated its own certification program.
3. There are various specialties within the occupation and individuals practice the occupation at numerous levels of experience and/or education.
4. The utility line tree trimmers are a unique subset of the occupation and receive special training in order to meet the tree trimming specifications to which the utility companies must adhere. The General Assembly addressed this issue in the 1989 Session in HJR 155.

### C. Conclusions

Two major conclusions have been drawn as a result of this study:

1. There is not sufficient evidence of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare which can justify regulation of this occupation; and
2. A state regulatory program is premature in light of the certification program implemented by the national professional organization.

### D. Recommendation

The Board of Commerce recommends that no state regulatory program be implemented at this time for Virginia arborists.

II. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and Purpose of Report

B. Profile of the Occupation



## II. Introduction

### A. Background and Purpose of this Report

The Board of Commerce has the legislative mandate for evaluating the need for regulation of occupations and making recommendations to the General Assembly.

Section 54.1-100 of the Code of Virginia (1950, as amended) states that "no regulation shall be imposed upon any profession or occupation except for the exclusive purpose of protecting the public interest when:

1. The unregulated practice of the profession or occupation can harm or endanger the health, safety, or welfare of the public, and the potential for harm is recognizable and not remote or dependent upon tenuous argument;
2. The practice of the profession or occupation has inherent qualities peculiar to it that distinguish it from ordinary work and labor;
3. The practice of the profession or occupation requires specialized skill or training and the public needs, and will benefit by, assurances of initial and continuing professional and occupational ability; and
4. The public is not effectively protected by other means."

In the 1989 Session of the Virginia General Assembly, Delegate Mitchell Van Yahres and Delegate John Watkins introduced House Joint Resolution 263 (HJR 263) requesting the Board of Commerce to study the need for certifying arborists. (See Appendix A for copy of HJR 263.)

Using the requirements set in Section 54.1-100 and Section 54.1-311 of the Code of Virginia which outline the degrees of regulation as well as the requirements for such regulation, the Board of Commerce began a six-month study of this issue. The study included information gathering from various sources, a complaint search, surveys of practitioners, and a public hearing. This report will serve to outline the results of the study and after considering the findings recommend the most appropriate action.

### B. Profile of the Occupation

While the Webster Dictionary definition of an arborist is "a specialist in the care and maintenance of trees," a thorough look at the occupation reveals various levels of expertise as well as many specialties within the occupation.

Some arborists are self-employed, others work for tree care companies. Still others work for municipalities, utility companies, or college campuses. Although not all arborists possess all skills, the areas in which they offer help include: planting, transplanting, pruning, fertilizing, pest management, and an array of other tree care practices. Some of these professionals are educated in arboriculture or sometimes in related fields of urban forestry, landscape architecture, horticulture, and others.

The public hearing and written comments brought attention to the "guy with the pickup truck and chain saw." In many instances, according to the witnesses, these individuals do not have training or education in the anatomy or physiology of trees. As a result, witnesses concluded that practices occur which are actually harmful to trees. Topping was used as an example of such impropriety. Likewise, problems can occur when uninsured individuals perform work, an accident occurs, and the consumer is left to seek redress through the courts.

There are currently three major professional associations for arborists: 1) the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA); 2) the National Arborists Association (NAA); and 3) the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA). All three associations have members in Virginia with the National Arborist Association representing commercial tree firms or suppliers and the ASCA consisting of the more senior members of the industry who perform tree appraisals or diagnose problems.

The International Society of Arboriculture is considered far-reaching in its membership, with over 4,800 members nationwide. ISA also views itself as a professional affiliation of commercial, educational, governmental, research and utility arborists dedicated to proper tree care. The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of ISA which includes Virginia has also initiated its own certification program which incorporates a rather thorough examination. The test is seen as especially difficult by members of the industry and at the time of this writing only 30 people in Virginia had successfully completed the exam.

The Board of Commerce surveyed the 166 Virginia members of ISA; 79 returned a completed survey. Of those 79, 35.4% had 1-10 years experience; 39.2% had 11-20 years experience; 19.1% had over 20 years experience; (6.3% not answered). When asked to check the major clients of their services, 7.6% checked utility companies; 68.4% checked homeowners; 25.3% checked cities/municipalities, and 2.9% checked other.

III. KEY ISSUES

- A. Utility Line Clearance
- B. Public Health, Safety and Welfare
- C. Consumer Education
- D. Association Certification
- E. Other States' Regulatory Programs

## II. Key Issues

### A. Utility Line Clearance

The Board of Commerce surveyed 69 Virginia electric utility companies, telephone companies, and cable TV companies. Forty responses were received, of which 57.5% indicated that only 0-10% of the arborists they employed were members of ISA (32.5% did not answer). Most utility companies contract with tree care companies to clear utility lines. These "tree trimmers," "utility line clearers," or "pruners," are trained for such work and must subscribe to the standards and specifications placed before them.

At the public hearing, utility company representatives testified to low consumer complaint records. Utilities, following standards set by the National Arborist Association, often use lateral tree trimming which may appear unsightly to the consumer. Unfortunately, trees that mature at 80 or 90 feet growing under a 40-foot power line cannot be trimmed attractively. It is important to note that utility companies are working with the arborist associations and nurseries to designate trees that mature at a much lower height for tree replacement programs. Such trees may also require a less frequent trimming cycle.

The utility companies represented at the public hearing as well as those who submitted written comments argued effectively that utility line clearers are a unique subset of the arborist industry. These individuals appear to receive extensive training from the companies they represent before performing services and the utility companies adhere to specifications established by the National Arborist Association, the Rural Electrification Administration, the U.S. Forest Service, Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as others. It is important to note that the State Corporation Commission, pursuant to House Joint Resolution 155 is concurrently studying the necessity for establishing guidelines for utility right-of-way maintenance and clearance.

The utility companies' opposition to certification for utility line clearers is based on the economic concern that increased costs for utility line clearance would be passed on to the consumer. While company representatives acknowledged that a certification program would be voluntary, they fear further legislation which would require companies to hire only certified arborists.

### B. Public Health, Safety and Welfare

The Board of Commerce recognizes the value and importance of preserving Virginia's trees. Likewise, the Board acknowledges that improper care and treatment of such trees can result in severe damage as well as loss of this great resource. However, the Board, through the various aspects of this study found no actual harm or

threat of danger to the public health, safety, or welfare by unregulated arborists.

The ten Consumer Affairs Offices in the Commonwealth were surveyed and of the five respondents, only two cases of damage to property were cited. The other complaints against arborists involved poor quality work, contract term dispute, or pruning of trees causing spread of disease. The Better Business Bureaus were also surveyed in Virginia and only one responded with one case of contract term dispute.

While harm to the Commonwealth's trees is of concern to the Board, the loss of trees as a threat to the public welfare is dependent upon tenuous argument in this case and therefore does not comply with Section 54.1-100 of the Code of Virginia. In addition, members of the Board of Commerce concur that State certification would not eliminate all bad tree care practices. Industry spokespersons acknowledged that in many cases consumers often dictate what happens to their trees unless the arborist can convince them that such practice is improper. The uneducated consumer as well as the voluntary nature of certification would not protect trees from improper care.

#### C. Consumer Education

The expertise and education needed for proper tree care was emphasized by the industry in this study. The question arises as to the means of selecting an arborist. Consumers have neither the knowledge about tree care nor about what to look for in a tree care specialist.

The Virginia Department of Forestry supports certification of arborists for these reasons. When consumers contact the Department of Forestry, the Department often needs to refer them to commercial arborists. Forestry feels that State certification would allow them to make referrals with some degree of confidence.

The Board of Commerce hopes that the newly established ISA Certification program will afford the Department of Forestry as well as individual consumers the ability to seek arborists who have met certain standards and abilities set by their own industry.

The Board also applauds education programs such as "The Tree Owner's Manual--A Guide to Protecting Your Growing Investment," prepared by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of ISA in conjunction with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service and the Fairfax County Arborists Office (see Appendix B). Another helpful brochure, "How to Hire an Arborist," is also available through the National Arbor Day Foundation (See Appendix C).

D. Association Certification

As previously mentioned, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) has recently initiated its own certification program and administered three examinations. An arborist must have five years of experience before sitting for the examination. This certification program appears to be quite comprehensive. Some individuals in the Chapter expressed concern that State regulation would insure that more arborists are meeting a certain set of standards, but these standards would address only minimum competence.

Although this program is a voluntary one, it does offer the consumer a means of identifying individuals who have met standards set by the industry.

E. Other States

In order to gather information about the ways in which other states regulate arborists, a survey was sent to the Secretaries of State around the country. Twenty-two regulatory agencies were identified and fifteen responded to the survey. The responses showed that 46.7% of those fifteen states regulated arborists.

Maryland, Alabama, Rhode Island and Oklahoma identified a program which fits the definition of licensure in Virginia. Maryland requires an applicant to have had four years of college education, preferably in the field of arboriculture or at least five years of experience before taking the examination. Every licensee in Maryland is required to carry liability and property damage insurance.

New Jersey has a certification program and South Dakota, Massachusetts and California offer certification through the International Society of Arboriculture.

IV. Research and Complaints

- A. Methodology
- B. Arborist Survey
- C. Arborist Office Survey
- D. Consumer Affairs Offices and Better Business Bureaus Survey
- E. Survey of Electric Utilities, Telephone and Cable TV Companies
- F. Survey of other States
- G. Public Hearing
- H. Written Comments

#### IV. Research and Complaints

##### A. Methodology

Due to the high direct and indirect costs inherent in regulation, it was necessary to conduct an extensive search and analysis of complaints and abuses to ensure that any problems are properly addressed at minimal costs and in the most efficient and effective manner.

The following section will analyze data compiled from the Board of Commerce surveys in addressing the issues set forth in the purpose of this report (page 1).

##### B. Arborist Survey

Interviews were conducted with the representatives of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the National Arborist Association, and the American Society of Consulting Arborists.

The ISA identified 166 members in Virginia; 79 responded to the survey. When asked whether they had ever come in contact with work performed by an incompetent arborist, 92.4% said yes, 7.6% no. Respondents described the frequency of such impropriety as Rarely 6.3%; Occasionally, 24.1%; Regularly 45.6%; Continuously 19.1%. However, only 12.7% described such work as causing physical harm to the public in Many Instances; 30.4% checked A Few; 24.1% answered Not a lot; 31.6% were Not aware of any instance in which physical harm occurred; 1.3% Not Answered.

Finally, 64.6% of the respondents believe that state regulation of arborists would benefit the general public; 17.7% No; 17.7% Uncertain. (See Appendix D for copy of Arborist Survey and responses.)

##### C. Arborist Office Survey

Twenty-two city, town, or county arborist offices were identified for the Board of Commerce. Twelve offices responded, with 25.0% indicating that there is public demand for regulation of arborists (16.7% No; 58.3% Uncertain). Only 8.3% of the respondents answered yes when asked whether poor work by an arborist had threatened the public health, safety, or welfare in their area (16.7% No; 66.7% Uncertain). The most frequent complaint against arborists in their area was unsightly utility line clearance at 33.3%. (See Appendix E for copy of survey and responses.)

##### D. Consumer Affairs Offices and Better Business Bureaus Survey

The ten Virginia Consumer Affairs Offices received surveys requesting information about complaints against arborists. Five offices responded and two of the offices considered problems with arborists to be Moderate; two checked Minor and one Non-existent.



Only one Better Business Bureau of the Commonwealth's four bureaus returned the survey and had experienced no problems with arborists. (See Appendices F and G for copies of these surveys and responses.)

E. Survey of Electric Utilities, Telephone and Cable TV Companies

The Board of Commerce surveyed 69 electric utilities, telephone and cable television companies of which 40 responded. When asked whether their company contracted with private tree service companies for utility line clearance, 60.0% responded Yes; 40.0% No.

Fifty percent of the respondents admitted that their company had received consumer complaints about utility line clearance (50.0% No), but 37.5% of such complaints were questions regarding the need for trimming or the frequency of trimming.

The majority (60.0%) of the respondents did not think utility line clearers should be certified (15.0% Yes; 25.0% Uncertain). In addition, 67.5% did not feel there is public demand for state certification of arborists (7.5% Yes; 25.0% Uncertain). (See Appendix H for copy of survey and responses.)

F. Survey of Other States

Only 22 Secretaries of State identified agencies which would have the authority for regulating arborists. We surveyed those 22 state agencies and 15 responded. Those states described the frequency of problems with arborists as 13.3% Never; 40.0% Rarely; 26.7% Occasionally; 6.7% Regularly; 13.3% Not Answered.

Although 46.7% of the states responding are currently regulating arborists, another 13.3% are considering regulation. (See Appendix I for copy of State survey and responses.)

G. Public Hearing

The Board of Commerce conducted a public hearing in Richmond on May 16, 1989 to gather information about the nature of the arborist industry and complaints relating to the occupation.

Over 35 individuals were present at the hearing and 17 presented testimony. Representatives from Virginia Power, Virginia Electric Cooperatives, Appalachian Power and Delmarva Power and Light Company opposed state certification of utility tree trimmers. The American Society of Landscape Architects, Virginia Chapter presented testimony supporting state certification.

Many arborists, including Virginia members of the International Society of Arboriculture offered their opinions on the pros and cons of state certification. (See Appendix J for list of public hearing participants.)

#### H. Written Comments

Approximately 18 written comments were submitted to the Board of Commerce for the purpose of being placed in the official record of this study. (See Appendix K for a Cumulative List of Written Comments.)

Opposing comments were received from numerous utility companies as well as tree service companies that work primarily for utility companies. The Chairman of the Certification Committee for the Mid-Atlantic Chapter expressed concern that state certification might allow for more arborists to be certified, but the standards would address only minimum competence.

Supporting opinions were submitted by the Richmond Professional Grounds Management Society, the Virginia Department of Forestry, and two leaders in the certification effort, Dr. R. Jay Stipes, a Professor of Plant Pathology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and John Hubbard of Hubbard Brothers, Inc., Tree Consultants. Both individuals expressed concern that only a few arborists in the Commonwealth are providing quality service.

V. SUMMARY

A. Findings

B. Regulatory Options

C. Conclusions

D. Board of Commerce Recommendation

## V. Summary

### A. Findings

In order to properly analyze all the information gathered through this study, the Board of Commerce returned to Section 54.1-100 of the Code of Virginia and outlined these findings: **No regulation shall be imposed upon any profession or occupation except for the exclusive purpose of protecting the public interest when:**

1. **The unregulated practice of the profession or occupation can harm or endanger the health, safety, or welfare of the public, and the potential for harm is recognizable and not remote or dependent upon tenuous argument;**

The Board of Commerce finds no recognizable harm or endangerment to the public health, safety or welfare by unregulated arborists.

2. **The practice of the profession or occupation has inherent qualities to it that distinguish it from ordinary work and labor.**

Through its study, the Board became aware of the varying definitions of an arborist and the numerous levels of training and expertise in the occupation. The Board acknowledges the distinctions between a well-educated arborist, a utility line clearer, and finally the "guy in the pick-up truck with a chain saw." At the same time, the Board believes that individuals from each level of expertise should not be restrained from operating in the marketplace. In addition, the Board finds that improprieties occur not only as a result of lack of education and/or experience, but also as a result of a lack of ethics. No regulatory program is totally successful in preventing the latter.

3. **The practice of the profession or occupation requires specialized skill or training and the public needs and will benefit by assurances of initial and continuing professional and occupational ability and**

The Board of Commerce concurs that certain aspects of tree care services require specialized skill and training. The Board finds that a state certification program, due to its voluntary nature, would not prevent consumers from selecting an incompetent arborist. While the Board believes that a state certification program would set some minimum standards for those choosing to participate, nothing would prevent individuals from offering services in an unethical or improper manner.

4. **The public is not effectively protected by other means.**

The members of the Board of Commerce believe a state regulatory program would be premature due to the International Society of Arboriculture's recent initiation of a certification program.

Given the fact that only three examinations have been given and only 30 arborists have qualified for certification, the Board believes this program should be given ample opportunity to work before the Commonwealth initiates another regulatory program. The Board believes that efforts by ISA to self-regulate as well as educate the consumer on tree care should be encouraged.

Finally, the Board of Commerce concludes that protection for consumers who wish to seek redress is available through the court system.

B. Regulatory Options

In many cases, regulation can be an effective means of dealing with problems in the marketplace. The concept implied behind a regulatory scheme is that regulation will be more effective than the free market systems and civil remedies in weeding out incompetent and dishonest practitioners.

In order for regulation to be effective, occurrences of abuses have to be recognizable, of a significant magnitude, and occur often enough for the regulation to have any impact.

The following are the degrees of regulation in the order in which they must be considered as specified by Title 54 of the Virginia Code Section 1.311:

1. Private civil actions and criminal prosecutions - Whenever existing common law and statutory causes of civil action or criminal prohibitions are not sufficient to eradicate existing harm or prevent potential harm, the Board may first consider the recommendation of statutory change to provide more strict causes for civil action and criminal prosecution.
2. Inspection and injunction - Whenever current inspection and injunction procedures are not sufficient to eradicate existing harm, the Board may promulgate regulations consistent with the intent of this chapter to provide more adequate inspection procedures and to specify procedures whereby the appropriate regulatory board may enjoin an activity which is detrimental to the public well being. The Board may recommend to the appropriate agency of the Commonwealth that such procedures be strengthened or it may recommend statutory changes in order to grant to the appropriate state agency the power to provide sufficient inspection and injunction procedures.
3. Registration - Whenever it is necessary to determine the impact of the operation of a profession or occupation on the public, the Board may implement a system of registration.
4. Certification - When the public requires a substantial basis for relying on the professional services of a practitioner, the Board may implement a system of certification.
5. Licensing - Whenever adequate regulation cannot be achieved by means other than licensing, the Board may establish licensing procedures for any particular profession or occupation.

The alternatives set forth below were examined by the Board of Commerce in considering the regulation of arborists.

## STATUS QUO

The Board of Commerce could recommend that regulation of arborists is unnecessary at this time.

### PROS:

1. No state regulation at this time would allow the International Society of Arboriculture's certification program to be in existence for awhile in order to determine whether a self-regulatory program of the occupation will be sufficient.
2. No expense to the public or members of the occupation.

### CONS:

1. The potential for impropriety and cases of harm to trees would continue to exist.

## CERTIFICATION

A recommendation to implement a system of certification would allow the Board of Commerce to grant a designation of professional competence in order that consumers may have a substantial basis for relying upon the services of an arborist. The certification could include minimum requirements for education and experience and for an examination of competency.

### PROS:

1. Since certification would be voluntary, such a regulatory program would not exclude those who do not wish to participate from continuing to practice the occupation.

### CONS:

1. The voluntary nature of certification means enforcement would have little effect on protecting the public from unskilled, unsupervised, uninsured individuals trimming or removing trees.
2. The cost of certification would most likely be passed on to the consumers.
3. Certification requirements would likely be less than the program requirements set by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of ISA.

## LICENSURE

A recommendation for licensure would require all individuals who wish to perform arborist services to qualify for a license. As determined by the Board of Commerce, the requirements for licensure could include minimum education and experience and/or an examination of competency.

**PROS:**

1. Licensure provides a mechanism for enforcement which would include a centralized clearinghouse for consumer complaints.
2. This alternative would be the only regulatory mechanism available to implement the ordering of restitution and damages.

**CONS:**

1. An increased expense to the practitioner (and to the consumer of the services) would be inherent in this alternative.
2. Again, the self-regulatory program recently initiated would not be given ample opportunity to test its effectiveness.

C. Conclusions

After considering the research, the following conclusions have been made:

1. There are no documented cases of harm to public health, safety or welfare which would justify regulation.
2. A state regulatory program is premature in light of the newly initiated certification program by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture.

D. Board of Commerce Recommendation

Based on the above conclusions, the Board sees no need to impose a restrictive form of occupational regulation at this time.



VI.

APPENDICES

- A. House Joint Resolution 263
- B. "The Tree Owner's Manual - A Guide to Protecting your Growing Investment"
- C. "How to Hire an Arborist"
- D. Arborist Survey and Results
- E. Arborist Office Survey and Results
- F. Consumer Affairs Office Survey and Results
- G. Better Business Bureau Survey and Results
- H. Electric Utilities, Telephone and Cable TV Survey and Results
- I. Other States Survey and Results
- J. Public Hearing Participants
- K. Cumulative List of Written Comments

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 263**

Offered January 16, 1989

*Requesting the Board of Commerce to study the need for certifying arborists.*

Patrons--Van Yahres and Watkins

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia have become more aware of the value of trees in the scheme of nature; and

WHEREAS, as the population in Virginia continues to increase, the preservation of trees becomes of major importance, not only to provide sources of fuel and fiber, but as plants for erosion control, filters of air, providers of shade, buffers of sound and habitats of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the care and health of trees have become more technical, requiring knowledge and skills unknown in the past; and

WHEREAS, the practice of tree care is considered a dangerous occupation requiring unusual physical and technical skills; and

WHEREAS, the practice of tree care and removal presents hazards to property and persons; and

WHEREAS, the recognition and removal of hazardous trees requires increased knowledge, skills and experience; and

WHEREAS, many present-day practitioners of tree care lack the necessary knowledge and skills to competently care for trees, thereby depriving the purchaser of the application of the information required in order to receive the highest quality workmanship needed for the expected return on his expenditure; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commerce is authorized by § 54.1-310 of the Code of Virginia to evaluate professions and occupations not regulated in the Commonwealth for consideration of whether such professions and occupations should be regulated, and to make recommendations as the public interest requires to the General Assembly concerning regulation; now, therefore, be it

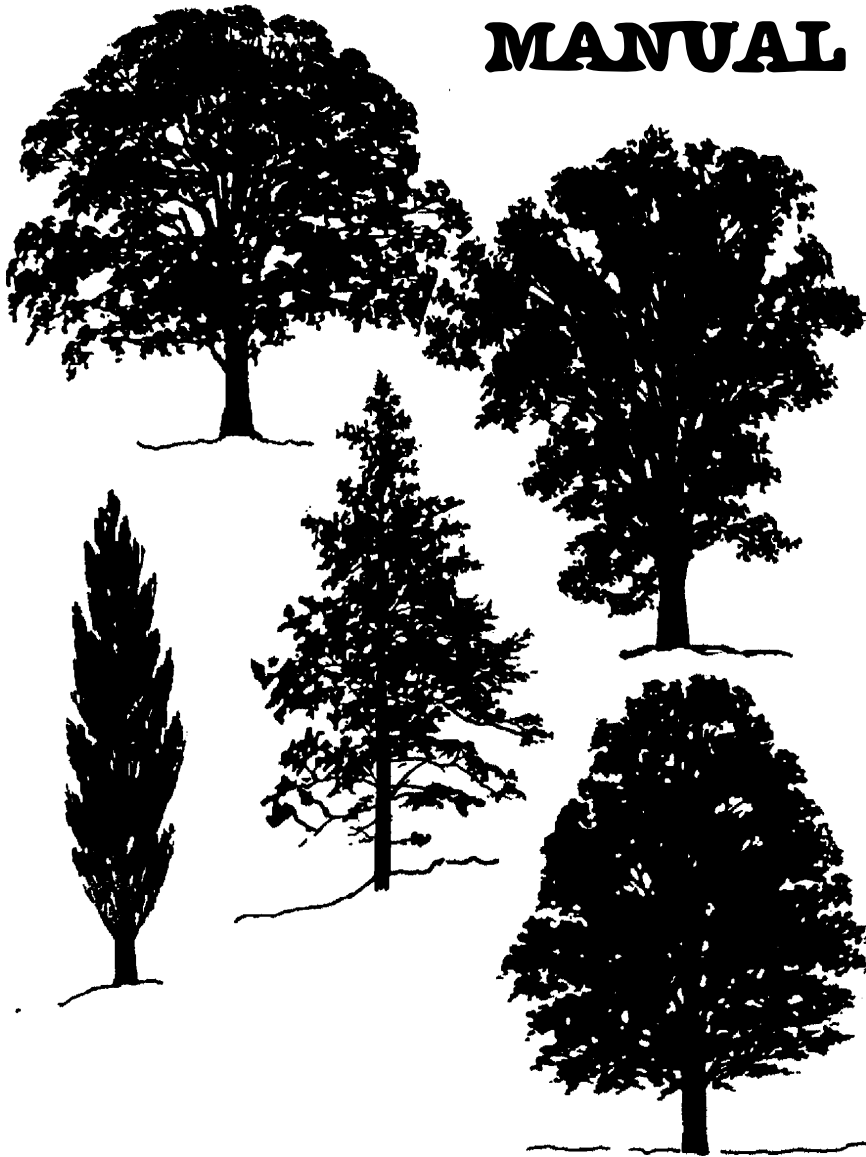
RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Board of Commerce is requested to study the need for certifying arborists in the Commonwealth.

The Board shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1990 Session of the General Assembly as provided in procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for processing legislative documents.

Official Use By Clerks	
Agreed to By	
The House of Delegates	Agreed to By The Senate
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_____ Clerk of the House of Delegates	_____ Clerk of the Senate

APPENDIX B

# **THE TREE OWNER'S MANUAL**



**A Guide To Protecting  
Your Growing Investment**

## **PROTECT YOUR GROWING INVESTMENT**

### **ARBORICULTURE**

Arborists practice arboriculture, the selection, planting and ongoing care of shade and ornamental trees. This brochure attempts to outline such methods generally accepted in the industry. It is offered as a tool for homeowners, builders and arborists. Our hope is that it assists in discriminating between beneficial and harmful maintenance techniques and enhances the overall quality of tree care performed in this area.

#### **Beware:**

Poor tree work can reduce vigor and kill your trees by:

- Exposing them to insect and disease invasion
- Creating unnecessary wounds which promote decay
- Reducing structural safety

Poor tree work can also ruin the aesthetic appeal of your trees and thereby reduce your property value.

#### **1. What should you expect from a commercial arborist's visit?**

- A comprehensive appraisal of the health and safety of the tree or trees
- A firm price and written contract for work recommended
- An explanation of how prescribed work will be performed
  - What climbing techniques will be used?
  - Will branches that are pruned be lowered or dropped?
- A specific explanation of the conditions of any proffered estimate
  - Responsibility for damage incurred
  - Extent of clean-up
- An offering of alternative pest controls available (I.P.M.)
- A check of trunk cavities and wounds and information as to their condition
- A list of references of previous clients upon request
- Charges for an ongoing tree maintenance plan
- Certificate of insurance, upon request

**NOTE: Well cared-for trees provide us with shade, beauty, privacy, wildlife habitat and enhanced property values. Allow certified \* and insured professionals to care for your trees which are a priceless investment in the future.**

\* Certified arborists have passed a qualifying exam developed by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture. Maryland also requires its own Tree Expert License.

## DON'T PAY TO RUIN YOUR TREES

### 2. Why are trees pruned?

- To invigorate - remove weak branches and sucker growth
- To protect plant - remove dead wood which attracts insects and fungal invasion
- To overcome root loss from construction damage or transplanting
- For safety - remove weak, dead or dangerous branches
- To avoid interference - remove branches interfering with houses, people, and other trees
- To provide utility line clearance
- To enhance appearance - prune to direct growth or to remove dead or unsightly branches

### 3. Should trees be "topped"? (Crown Reduction)

- Not generally recommended because:
  - "Topping" trees usually reduces tree height without regard to proper pruning cuts or tree beauty
  - Strong and healthy trees do not need to be reduced
  - "Topping" often creates harsh wounds which may cause future problems
  - "Topping" may stimulate weak new sucker growth
- If size reduction is necessary:
  - Should be done as lightly as possible
  - Must be done with the proper cut
    - (Trunk is cut back to healthy lateral branch no less than 1/3 the size of trunk, with a slant cut as shown)
  - Late Winter is the best time

#### DO NOT:

- Leave 90° cuts
- Leave stubs

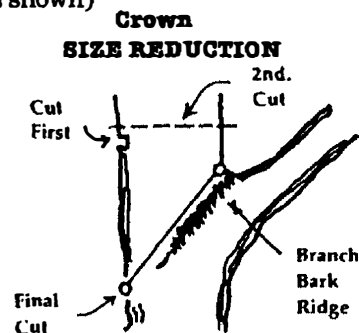
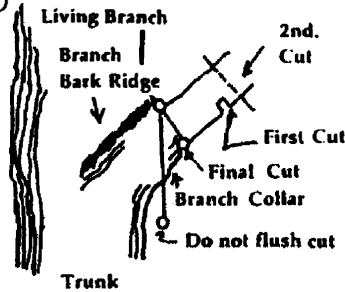


Fig. 2

## PROTECT YOUR GROWING INVESTMENT

### 4. How is a heavy branch cut from a tree?

- To prevent ripping, undercut branch approximately one foot from final cut to a depth of about 1/4 of the branch diameter (see diagram - first cut)
- Sever branch from the top with a cut just beyond undercut (2nd. cut)
- Remove the resulting stub, between A and B, at the branch collar (located at the base of the branch) taking care to avoid damaging the collar (final cut)



#### DO NOT:

- Leave stubs past the branch collar
- Cut into branch collar (flush cut)
- Allow bark to rip down side of tree
- Cut branches near electrical lines. Call your local Utility Company beforehand for assistance.

### 5. Should pruning cuts be painted?

- Not recommended with any material now available because:
  - Does not prevent insect and disease infestations
  - Proper wound closure is linked to the tree's genetic vigor and the precision of the cut, not to any material applied later
  - Asphalt base tree paint may trap moisture, increase decay, and retard natural wound closure.

### 6. How should cavities and wounds be treated?

- Clean out loose, punky wood only
- Cut back edges only enough to provide smooth margins
- If filling is used, it must be flexible (ex: foam vs. concrete)

#### DO NOT:

- Clean out too deeply (into firm wood), thereby breaking tree's barrier zone that isolates decay
- Widen wound unnecessarily or point at top and bottom
- Insert drain tubes in cavities accumulating water

## DON'T PAY TO RUIN YOUR TREES

### 7. Should trees be sprayed?

- Only for specific problems at proper times with a carefully chosen pesticide used according to label directions.

#### DO NOT:

- Spray as a general preventive control of insects. With certain exceptions it is not necessary!
- Overdo it
- Allow spraying by companies without a certified pesticide applicator on staff
- Expect sprays or injections (See #9) to alleviate poor tree health which initially attracted pests.

### 8. What alternatives exist to spraying chemicals?

- Correct underlying factors which weaken trees, thereby attracting insect and fungal attack; e.g.,
  - Proper selection of right tree for location (hardiness)
  - Timely pruning, fertilization, mulching, and watering
- Use biological controls such as B.t. (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) (for caterpillars) and oil (for scale, mites, and other insects), etc.
- Trunk injections in some situations (See # 9)
- Tolerate limited "aesthetic" damage
- Remove dead wood immediately (sanitation) to reduce pest attack.
- Integrated Pest Management (I.P.M.) approach includes many of the above practices

### 9. Are trunk injections of any value?

- Injection holes are wounds, tolerable only when pest control or fertilization needs outweigh damage done by injection wounding
- Materials injected directly into the trunk flare can stimulate tree growth and fight pest attack on a temporary basis

#### DO NOT:

- Leave injection units in trunk after solution has been absorbed
- Inject healthy trees unnecessarily

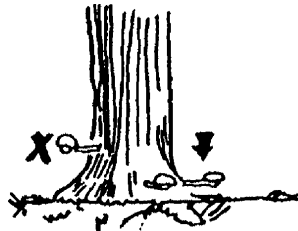


Fig. 4

## PROTECT YOUR GROWING INVESTMENT

### 10. Why are trees fertilized?

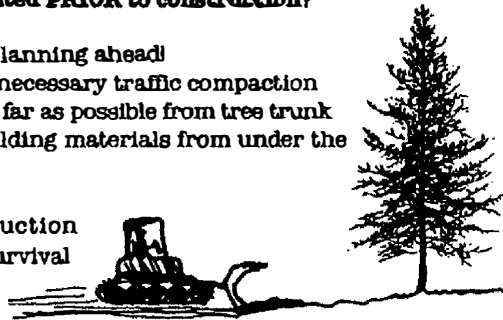
- To replace nutrients, essential for healthy trees, which are depleted at various rates according to the soil, competing vegetation (grass, etc.), and amount of mulch or leaf cover present.
- Some trees need only nitrogen supplements.

#### DO NOT:

- Overfertilize
- Fertilize every year (fertilizing your lawn helps your tree!)

### 11. How should trees be treated PRIOR to construction?

- Tree survival depends on planning ahead!
- Design the site to avoid unnecessary traffic compaction
- Erect protective barriers as far as possible from tree trunk
- Exclude all fill dirt and building materials from under the branch spread
- Prune roots and canopy
- Fertilize prior to construction to increase chance of survival



#### DO NOT:

- Allow construction equipment beneath trees!
- Forget that most tree roots spread to twice the tree height!

### 12. How should trees be treated AFTER construction?

- Prune to invigorate
- Subsurface fertilize to increase air, water, and nutrient availability to roots
- Water thoroughly when soil is dry, especially during July and August
- Mulch 2" deep and as wide an area as possible around the tree
- Aerate to ease soil compaction beneath tree

#### DO NOT:

- Delay proper care



**DON'T PAY TO RUIN YOUR TREES**

**13. What techniques damage trees?**

- Climbing living trees with spikes
- Improper topping and pruning (see #3, #4, #5), such as flush cutting
- Filling cavities with concrete (see # 6)
- Enlarging or "pointing" trunk wounds (see # 6)
- Allowing branches to rip bark below pruning cuts (see # 4)
- Applications of any wound dressing to pruning cuts or wounds (see # 6)
- Leaving rope or wire wrapped around trunks or branches
- Indiscriminate spraying and injections (See # 7, #8, #9)



**NOTE:**

**MOST PROFESSIONAL ARBORISTS  
BELONG TO THE INTERNATIONAL  
SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE (I. S. A.)  
OR THE NATIONAL ARBORIST  
ASSOCIATION (N. A. A. )**



This brochure was prepared by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter, International Society of Arboriculture, in conjunction with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service and the Fairfax County arborist's office.

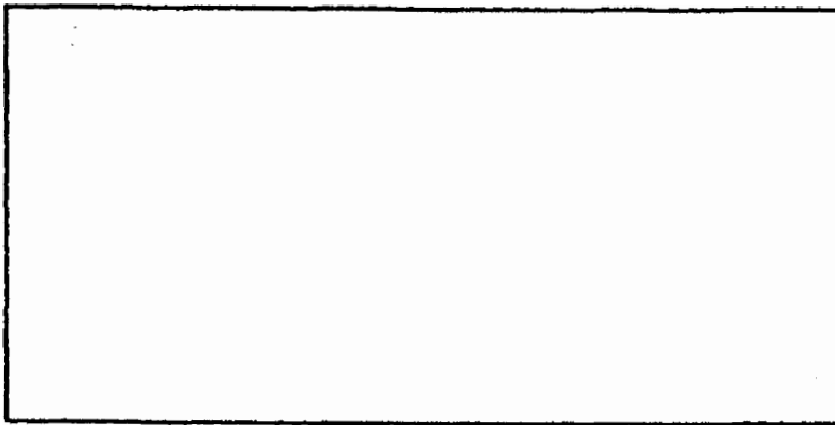
# VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

VIRGINIA  
TECH

VIRGINIA  
STATE



For more information contact your local county extension service, or:



Virginia Cooperative Extension Service is an Educational Service of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and Virginia State University, Virginia's Land-Grant Institutions, with U.S. Department of Agriculture and Local Governments Cooperating Programs, activities, and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, or political affiliation.  
An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



# TREE CITY USA BULLETIN

for the  
*Friends of Tree City USA*

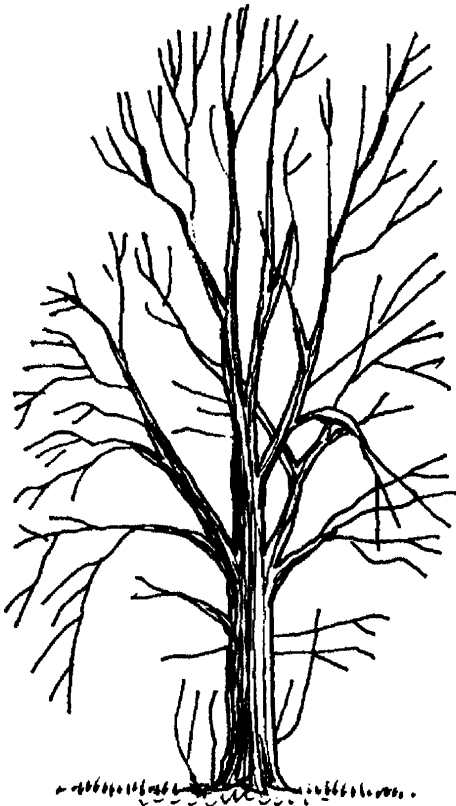
Bulletin No.  
James R. Fazio, Editor



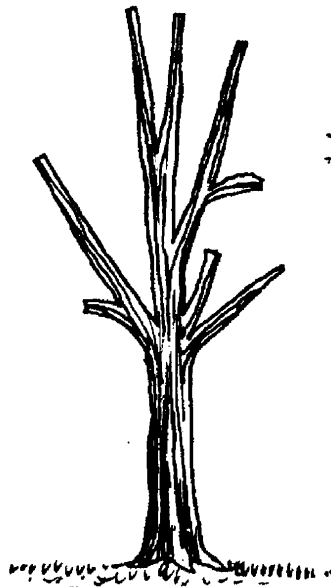
## How to Hire an Arborist

Around the home or along the avenue, trees are one of our most valuable assets. They are also a long-term investment. Like any investment our trees require careful decisions and the occasional advice and service of a professional. In the world of trees, **arborists** form the cadre of

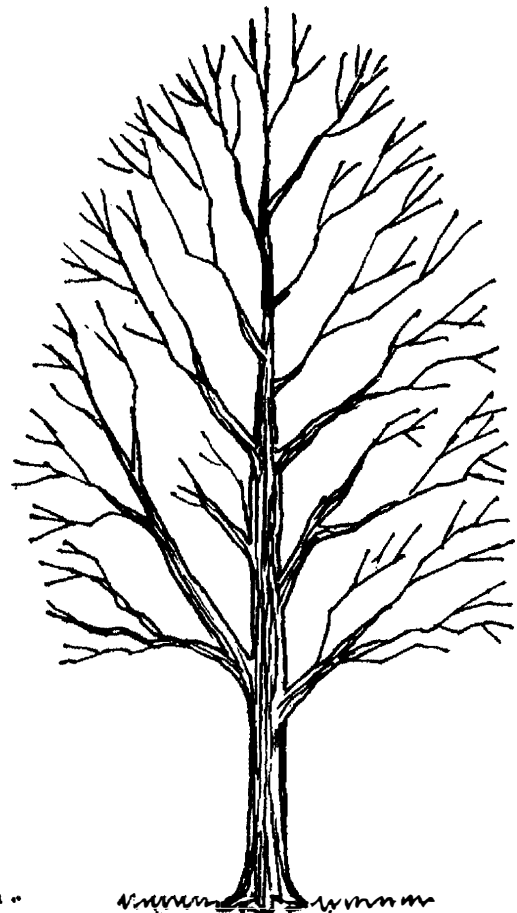
specialists who can safeguard your trees and save you from the long-term consequences of their neglect or the wrong decision. In this issue, learn how you can judge when to call an arborist and how to select the right one.



A neglected shade tree



The work of a poorly chosen "tree expert"



The work of a competent arborist

# When Do I Need an Arborist?

Do you own shade trees and care about their place in the future?

Yes  No

Are your trees healthy and vigorous, but you are the kind of person who believes in preventing problems through planning?

Yes  No

Are you experiencing any of the conditions shown below?

Yes  No

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," the services of an arborist can help provide healthy trees and peace of mind.

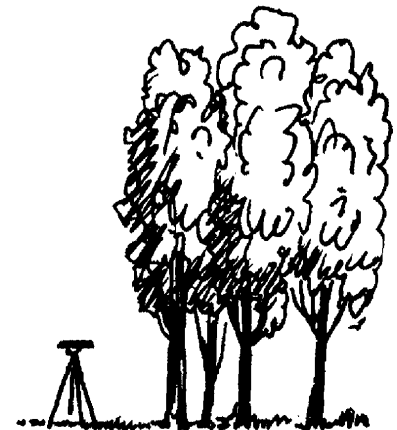
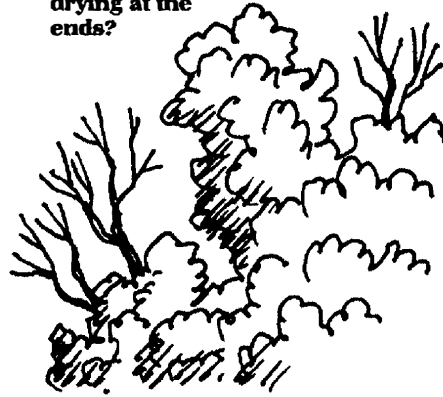


**Leaves don't look right?**

- Yellowing
- Under-sized
- Dark blotches
- Withering

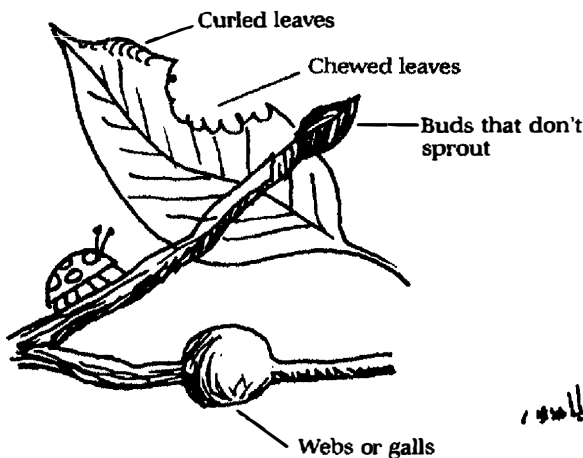


**Are limbs drying at the ends?**

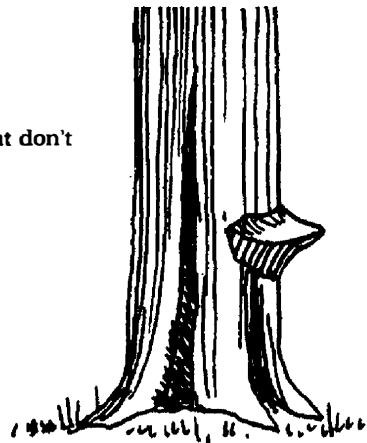


Do you plan to build on a lot with trees, and want to save some of them?

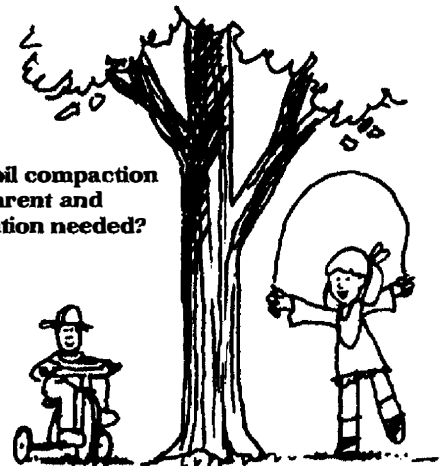
Are more than the usual number of insects noticeable, or do you see signs of their presence?

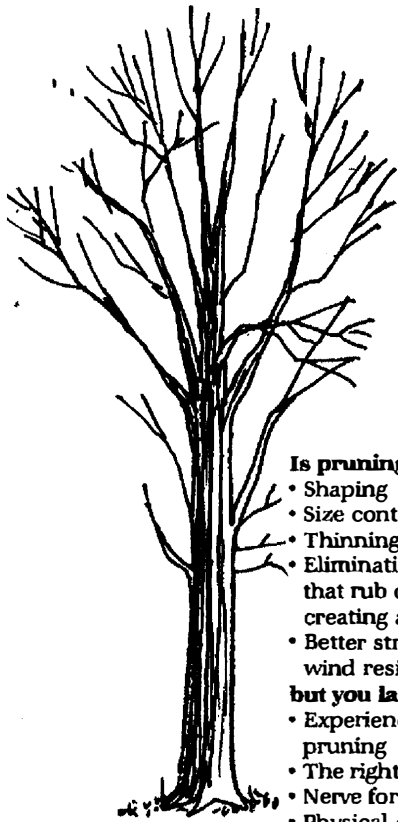


Are there cracks in the trunk, or cankers growing on the bark?



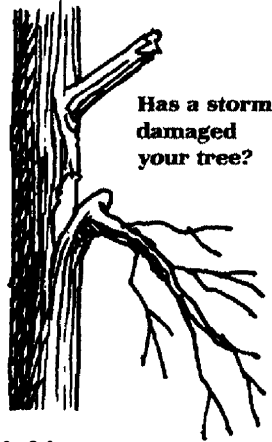
Is soil compaction apparent and aeration needed?





**Is pruning needed for**

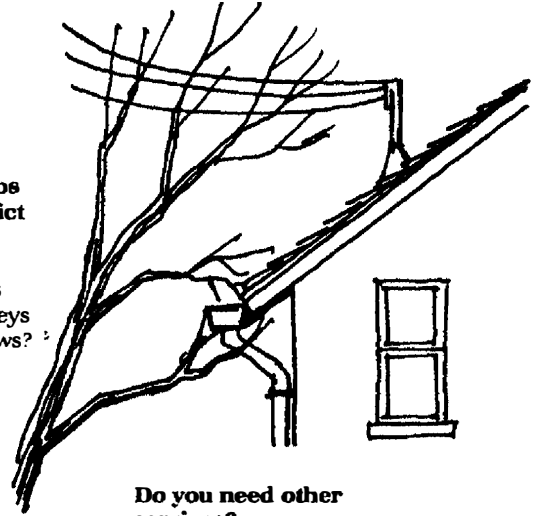
- Shaping
  - Size control
  - Thinning branches
  - Eliminating branches that rub or are creating a problem
  - Better structure and wind resistance
- but you lack...**
- Experience with pruning
  - The right tools
  - Nerve for heights
  - Physical condition for hard work?



**Has a storm damaged your tree?**

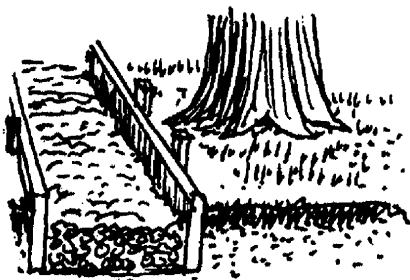
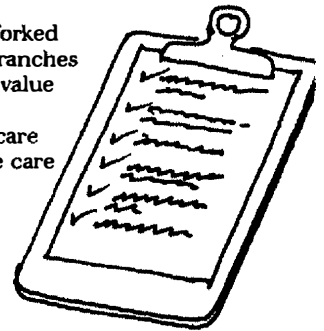
**Are limbs in conflict with**

- Wires
- Gutters
- Chimneys
- Windows?



**Do you need other services?**

- Lightning protection systems
- Cabling of forked trunks or branches
- Appraising value
- Fertilizing
- Preventive care
- Annual tree care check-ups



**Must roots be cut for a new sidewalk or building?**



International Society of Arboriculture

## What is an Arborist?

Arborists are the men and women who make a career of caring for the urban forest. Some arborists are self-employed, others work for tree care companies. Still others work for municipalities, utility companies or on college campuses. Some serve as consultants to planners, developers, insurance companies, public agencies and attorneys. For whoever they work, arborists are professionals concerned primarily with the planting and care of trees. Although not all arborists possess all skills, the areas in which they can help you include: planting, transplanting, pruning, fertilizing, pest management, and an array of other tree care practices. Most arborists are also skilled in tree removal and value appraisals.

Consulting arborists are a bit different. These experts offer advice, but usually not the actual tree services. They specialize in tree appraisals, diagnosing problems, recommending treatments and suggesting where to obtain compe-

tent service. They are often the "second opinion" before deciding on tree work, or the legal expert in court cases. As independent consultants, they are often called on the same way a financial planner is called on to map financial strategy rather than using a stockbroker; insurance agent or other financial professional who sells a product. See page 8 for directory information.

In this bulletin, we focus on the commercial arborist — the person you would turn to when hiring a specialist to work on the trees around your home or business, and to handle a removal if necessary. These professionals are educated in arboriculture — the art and science of planting, caring for and maintaining trees — or sometimes in the related fields of urban forestry, landscape architecture, horticulture and others. A qualified arborist can serve you in meeting any of the needs shown on page 2 and at other times you need advice or service related to your trees.

# So, You Need an Arborist...

Hiring a tree care specialist deserves all the consideration and caution that goes into selecting a banker or home builder. A mistake can be expensive and long-lasting, but the right

choice can assure health, beauty and longer life for your trees.

## Twelve Tips for Selecting an Arborist

- 1 Check in the phone directory, usually under Trees, Tree Service or Tree Care Service. Although anyone can list themselves in the yellow pages, a listing at least indicates some degree of permanence.
- 2 Beware of door-knockers. Most reputable companies have all the work they can handle without going door-to-door. Door-knockers are especially common after storms when non-professionals see a chance to earn some quick money. Often, storm damage creates high risk situations for both workers and homeowners, and there is opportunity for even more damage to trees and shrubs if work is not done correctly.
- 3 Never let yourself be rushed by bargains ("If you sign an agreement today, I can take ten percent off the price..."). Never pay in advance.
- 4 Ask for certificates of insurance, including proof of liability for personal and property damage (such as your house and your neighbor's), and workman's compensation. Then phone the insurance company to make certain the policy is current. *Under some circumstances, you can be held financially responsible if an uninsured worker is hurt on your property, or damage is done to a neighbor's property!*
- 5 Ask for local references — other jobs the company or individual has done. Take a look at some, and if possible, talk with the former client. Experience, education and a good reputation are signs of a good arborist.
- 6 Determine if the arborist is a member of any of the organizations shown on page 8. Membership does not guarantee quality, but lack of membership casts doubt on the person's professionalism.
- 7 If arborist certification is available in your area, determine if the arborist complies with the requirements. The International Society of Arboriculture (page 8) can tell you if there is a certification program where you live.
- 8 Have more than one arborist look at your job and give you estimates. Don't expect one to lower a bid to match another's, and be willing to pay for the estimate if necessary; but two or more opinions and cost estimates are worth your extra effort.
- 9 A good arborist will offer a wide range of services (pruning, fertilizing, cabling/bracing, lightning protection, pest control, etc.).
- 10 A good arborist will recommend topping a tree only under rare circumstances (such as to save the tree after severe physical damage to the crown, or for the decorative effect of pollarding in a formal setting or restricted space).



Jim Parlo

Avoid arborists who routinely top trees.

- 11 A conscientious arborist will not use climbing spikes if the tree is to remain in the landscape.
- 12 Beware of an arborist who is eager to remove a living tree. Removal clearly should be a last resort.

## Price

Tree care costs money. But considering that trees can contribute up to 15 percent of your property value, the expense of proper care is one of the best investments you can make. Tree care, like personal health care, is not the place to cut corners.

Reputable arborists have made large investments in equipment and training. Trucks, hydraulic booms, chippers, sprayers, stump cutters and chainsaws represent major capital investments and maintenance costs. Labor, insurance, safety training and continuing education add to the overhead. The price charged for a job reflects all these costs as well as a reasonable margin of profit.

Remember that pruning is an art. The arborist's skill and professionalism may be more important than low bid.

Here are two good ways to save on the cost of tree care:

- 13 Schedule your work well in advance, maybe as much as six months. Most arborists are busy, and many services must be done during a certain time of year. By allowing the company to schedule your work in advance and, if possible, when other work is at low ebb, you may be able to arrange a savings on price.
- 14 If you can get together with several neighbors who also need work done, you may be able to interest a company in a group discount.

# The Agreement

To prevent misunderstandings and be assured of having your work performed to the standards you expect, a contract is key. Most companies have their own form and the conditions included vary widely. Read the document carefully. If you have questions, a local forester, consulting arborist, or your attorney may be able to add clarification and valuable insights.

In an article that is part of American Forestry Association's Urban Forestry Home Workbook, urban forester Steve Sandfort and arborist/company president Edwin Butcher listed several key items that a contract should include:

- ☑ The dates that work will begin and end.
- ☑ Exactly what work will be done. For example, "prune all dead, dying, diseased and weak branches 1½ inches or greater in diameter." If your tree is to be sprayed, get a written statement detailing the specific insect or disease to be treated, the chemical to be used and how much, and what you need to do (cover lawn furniture, keep pets inside, etc.). If fertilizing is to be done, it should be stated how many pounds of fertilizer per inch of trunk diameter will be applied by what method.
- ☑ Specify what cleanup work will be done and when. Who gets any firewood, and if it is you, will it be cut into 16-inch lengths and stacked by the garage?
- ☑ Clarify if removal of a tree includes grinding out the stump and surface roots to one foot below grade, filling with topsoil and planting grass.
- ☑ The total dollar amount you will be charged. You don't want a surprise such as: "Here is the \$300 I owe you for working on my five trees. \$300? Sorry, lady, that was \$300 per tree!"
- ☑ Work is usually priced one of two ways: (a) as a single price for the job, or (b) on an hourly basis plus materials. When using the latter, be sure to include the wording, "...but not to exceed..."

And don't be shy about asking questions such as, "How do you make your pruning cuts?" or "How can I be sure that pedestrians and curious children will be kept safe?"

In short, be sure you have a contract that is complete and clear, and be satisfied in advance that your concerns will be dealt with fairly by the people you hire to work on your trees.

If a dispute does arise or you would like an expert to check the quality of work, seek the services of a consulting arborist (See page 8), urban forester, park or utility arborist, or similar specialist who is not in competition with the arborists you hired.

# Use Arborists for Preventative Care

Some arborists offer inspections of your trees for a flat annual rate. This is an excellent way to have insect or disease problems diagnosed in time to take effective action. It can also ensure light, early pruning that will prevent major, corrective pruning later on. Regular fertilizing, soil aeration, deep watering, and similar routine tasks will also help assure that your trees remain healthy.

## A Salute to Arborists

Arborists are among the hardest working people in America. Their work is physically demanding, often dangerous, and intellectually challenging. Their investments in equipment are great, and as the knowledge of trees and tree care continues to grow, their need for education never stops.

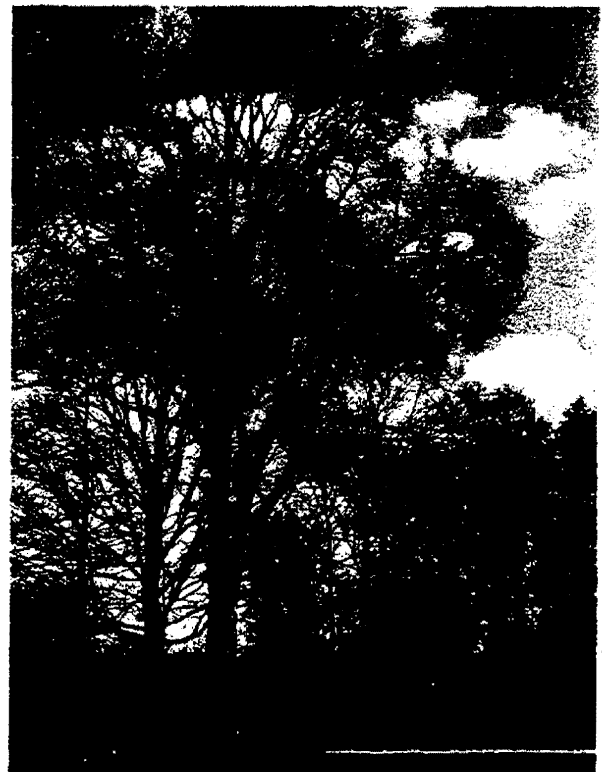
Arborists often donate their skills and services at Arbor Day events and every day they are on the front line of educating the public about tree care. The men and women who devote their lives to arboriculture are the professional stewards of our communities' green treasures.

For young people who love trees and the outdoors, becoming an arborist is a career worth exploring. For those of us in other disciplines, arboriculture is a calling worthy of our respect and gratitude.

To the arborists of America from those of us who love trees -- a big "thank you!"

## Like a Good Haircut...

Remember, at first glance a well-pruned tree often looks like no work was done at all, even after an arborist has spent a goodly amount of time removing numerous carefully selected branches. Like a good haircut.



International Society of Arboriculture

# Confessions of the Editor

It happened in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, usually in the early morning hours while most people slept and traffic was light. It was always in the better sections of town, at least by my standards as a college student. Slowly I would cruise the tree-lined streets, eyes scanning the trees of the houses I passed. Occasionally I would pull over and jot down a house number.

Later that day I knocked on the doors, introducing myself as a forestry student who needed to earn money. It was a good opener. At the same time I would hand them a business card I had printed down on Main Street in Morgantown. While they studied the card, I would say that one of their trees looked like it should be taken down. My friends and I would do the job — and a sum was suggested.

Boy, did it work. We never lacked for jobs. Maybe it was my honest looks, or perhaps it was our clever cards with the words *Fully Insured* right in the center. I'm still not sure what that meant, but my partner, who owned our little "company" by virtue of owning the pickup and our only chainsaw, said that we were covered. No one asked for details.

We were conscientious lads and worked hard. I got ten percent for landing the job, plus wages for working on it. I worked fast so I could locate more jobs and collect more bonuses. Nice system. If someone paid in advance, we'd work even faster and be gone before we hardly began.

Removals were our favorite jobs. There were plenty of tense moments as limbs were lowered gingerly between power lines. There was excitement, too, as we'd hang on and sway back and forth after topping a big one, or as trunks came crashing down between houses. Just the sort of adventure made for a forestry student. Pruning was less fun and it brought more

complaints. No one seemed sure what a good pruning job should look like, and our decisions were based largely on where we could climb with our spikes and belt without killing ourselves. Years later I was to learn there are actually guidelines and reasons behind pruning shade trees, but that wasn't part of our forestry education and it really wasn't of much interest to me.

Disposal of limbs was another challenge. Our mode of operation called for finding an empty lot somewhere, or a stretch of road with a pullout and no houses. Sometimes this part of the job took place after dark.

We even planted some trees, as long as the people were happy with native species. Whatever the customer wanted, we would find somewhere in the nearest woods or grown-over fields. Our eyes were sharper than our scruples about who owned the land. Most of the time the tree would live and we even replaced some that died if we were still doing jobs in the neighborhood.

Looking back, I confess two things. First, that we made a lot of money! Second, that our clients were not well served. Not that many were unhappy. After all, they paid us far less than they would have paid a legitimate tree care company. But few knew the risk they took, and I doubt that our pruning or planting jobs stood against the tests of time. We also did the pruned trees no good with our climbing spikes, and I know that some elderly folks, especially, were frightened into having trees taken out that, in fact, were not the danger to life or property that we made them out to be. So, I'm not proud of those early days in my career, but I do know that if the best game wardens are former poachers, then I am in a good position to present some useful insights about hiring an arborist. Perhaps this issue of the *Bulletin* will help repay a debt to society.



Nandy Senger



## Contracting Arborist Services

In municipalities not having their own tree care staff, contracting with local arborists is usually a better alternative than giving untrained employees from other departments the responsibility for care of the street and park trees. When contracting is used, each municipality has its standard forms and procedures. However, due to the unique nature and needs of tree care, there are special considerations worth noting. Most of the tips on pages 4 and 5 are just as applicable for a local government as they are for individual property owners. In addition, the following suggestions are offered:

- ☑ Since most contracts must be awarded to the lowest bidder, be sure to place adequate screening criteria in the work specifications. Examples include a minimum amount of insurance coverage and years of experience, evidence of equal opportunity hiring practices, etc.
- ☑ Be specific in how the tree care work is to be performed. Standards established by the National Arborist Association serve as excellent criteria.
- ☑ Require that the successful bidder possesses adequate equipment to do the job.
- ☑ Require that *all* work be listed that was done in the region and was over a certain dollar value. This enables an adequate check on past work performance, and prevents the bidder from listing only selected references that he or she knows will provide endorsements.
- ☑ Provide the contractor with a flier or information packet to distribute to homeowners in advance of any work done in their vicinity. This eliminates the surprise element and explains what kind of tree work will be done, why the work is necessary, and when crews will be in the area. Also include the name and phone number of the contractor or whoever should receive questions from the residents.
- ☑ Use newspaper and radio to announce contract awards and explain what tree work will be done.

Employers can contribute to continuing education by making a variety of periodicals available to arborists.

## Education and Continuing Education

Education as an arborist can begin with on-the-job training, an associates degree from a college or vocational technician's program, or a baccalaureate degree in urban forestry, horticulture or a related field. For anyone with an interest in the green industry, initial opportunities for education and entry into the profession present no barrier.

For the employers of arborists, both private and governmental, the challenge is in providing *continuing* education opportunities. Continuing education is essential for keeping arborists in pace with the latest discoveries about trees, soils, chemicals, insects, diseases and the many techniques of arboriculture. It is also essential to keep employees up to date with state and local laws, or regulations resulting from such federal legislation as the Environmental Pesticide Act and the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Perhaps most importantly, continuing education boosts morale. Everyone from the worker who feeds limbs into a chipper to the experienced foreman has a desire for advancement and the chance to learn and to grow as an individual. Continuing education is the key to these opportunities and at the same time can help build pride, contribute to safety, increase job satisfaction, and reduce turnover.

Many opportunities for continuing education in arboriculture are available — some requiring time off and an investment by the employer, others available to any employee willing to make a small investment in the future and put in a little time off the job.

**TREE CITY USA**

# Other Sources of Information

*Tree City USA Bulletin will inform readers of helpful, up-to-date publications which provide more depth or that are readily available for community distribution. The editor welcomes sample copies to consider for inclusion in future editions.*

**To order additional Bulletin copies...** Friends of Tree City USA members may obtain a single copy of any Tree City USA Bulletin free of cost. Quantities of any issue are available at 25 for \$6.25 or 500 for \$100. To order, specify the issue number and quantity, and make your check payable to: The National Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410.

The Bulletins available are:

- No. 1 *How to Prune Young Shade Trees*
- No. 2 *When a Storm Strikes*
- No. 3 *Resolving Tree-Sidewalk Conflicts*
- No. 4 *The Right Tree in the Right Place*
- No. 5 *Living with Urban Soils*
- No. 6 *How to Hire an Arborist*

**To join the Friends of Tree City USA...** to receive a subscription to the Tree City USA Bulletin...and to become more involved in the urban forestry movement in your town and throughout America, send a \$10 dues-donation to Friends of Tree City USA, National Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410. Make your check payable to National Arbor Day Foundation.

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## Trade Journals

*Arbor Age*. Monthly. P.O. Box 156, Encino, CA 91426-0156  
*Landscape Management*. Monthly. P.O. Box 6198, Duluth, MN 55806-9898

## Career Information

*Careers in Arboriculture*. Contact ISA or NAA for a free copy. A list of colleges offering arboriculture or urban forestry degrees is also available from these organizations.

## Organizations

American Forestry Association  
P.O. Box 2000  
Washington, DC 20013

AFA's activities include sponsorship of the National Urban Forest Council, an interactive organization for urban forest supporters. The Council publishes the *Forum* newsletter, an information source about urban forestry issues and techniques. AFA publishes *American Forests* 6 times a year and holds an annual conference and other events.

American Society of Consulting Arborists  
700 Canterbury Road  
Clearwater, FL 34624

Membership is for practicing arborists who specialize in advising, diagnosing, recommending treatments, making appraisals and offering legal testimony in court. A membership directory and application procedures are available free. Members are provided a bi-monthly newsletter, *Arboricultural Consultant*, reference services, and an annual educational meeting.

International Society of Arboriculture  
P.O. Box 908  
Urbana, IL 61801

ISA offers various membership categories for professionals, students, and interested lay citizens. Currently there are also 21 regional chapters. ISA promotes the improvement of arboriculture among its members and the public, sponsors research, produces educational materials, maintains a computerized information service, and holds a combined annual meeting, trade show and arborist's jamboree. Publishes the *Journal of Arboriculture* monthly.

National Arborist Association  
P.O. Box 1094  
Amherst, NH 03031-1094

Membership in NAA is comprised of commercial tree care service firms. It has developed sets of standards for pruning, cabling and other techniques widely used in the industry. NAA also provides a wide range of literature, correspondence courses, and audio-visual training materials about safety and tree care techniques. A catalog is available and materials may be purchased by non-members. Field personnel of member firms can receive a monthly newsletter, *The Treeworker*.

88810020



TREE CITY USA

The Tree City USA program is sponsored by The National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters. To achieve the national recognition of being named as a Tree City USA, a town or city must meet four standards:

- Standard 1: A Tree Board or Department
- Standard 2: A City Tree Ordinance
- Standard 3: An Annual Community Forestry Program
- Standard 4: An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

Each winning community receives a Tree City USA flag, plaque, and community entrance signs. Towns and cities of every size can qualify. Tree City USA application forms are available from your state forester or The National Arbor Day Foundation.



The  
National  
Arbor Day  
Foundation

100 Arbor Avenue  
Nebraska City, NE 68410

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
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Arbor Day  
Foundation

## For the Friends of Tree City USA

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Debra Vought

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Department of Commerce  
3600 West Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23230ARBORIST SURVEY

1. How many years of experience do you have as an arborist?  
(RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE CHOICES GIVEN)

35.4%	39.2%	19.1%
1-10 years	11-20 years	Over 20 years
(6.3% NOT ANSWERED)		

2. Did you graduate from a college or university with a degree in arboriculture?

30.4% YES	60.8% NO	9.8% MISSING
-----------	----------	--------------

3. Do you operate your own business?

58.2% YES	41.8% NO
-----------	----------

4. What would you estimate the average charge (in dollars) for the type of work you most frequently perform?

7 RESPONSES OF \$25.00 - \$65.00 PER HOUR
11 RESPONSES OF \$250.00 - \$600.00

5. Who are the major clients of your services?

7.6%	utility companies
68.4%	homeowners
25.3%	cities/municipalities
29.1%	other (HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS, NURSERIES, LAWN SERVICE COMPANIES)

6. Have you ever come in contact with work performed by an incompetent arborist?

92.4% YES	7.6% NO
-----------	---------

7. If yes, how would you describe the frequency? (RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE CHOICES GIVEN)

6.3%	24.1%	45.6%	19.1%
RARELY	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY	CONTINUOUSLY
(5.1 % NOT ANSWERED)			

8. How would you describe your awareness of instances in which physical harm occurred to the public as a direct result of poor work by an arborist.

12.7%	MANY	30.4%	A FEW
24.1%	NOT A LOT	31.6%	NOT AWARE OF ANY
1.3%	NOT ANSWERED		

9. Do you believe that State regulation of arborists would benefit the general public?

64.6%	YES	17.7%	NO	17.7%	UNCERTAIN
-------	-----	-------	----	-------	-----------

10. If yes to question #9, please list benefits that regulation would accomplish or if no to question #9, list reasons not to regulate arborists.

YES	NO
1. STANDARDIZE PRACTICES	1. NO GUARANTEE THAT QUALITY WORK WOULD RESULT
2. REQUIRE FULL INSURANCE COVERAGE	2. ISA CERTIFICATION OF ARBORISTS ALREADY IN PLACE
3. EDUCATE THE PUBLIC	3. UTILITY COMPANIES ENCOURAGE PROPER TECHNIQUES AND EDUCATION
4. ASSURE QUALITY WORK	4. INEFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT
5. FAIR PRICING	5. ANOTHER LAYER OF BUREAUCRACY; INCREASED TAXES
6. MORE PROFESSIONALISM	6. BAD PRUNING WILL STILL EXIST
7. MORE PROFIT FOR REPUTABLE COMPANIES	7. CUSTOMER WILL CHOOSE LOWER BID ANYWAY
8. EDUCATE MORE ARBORISTS ON DISEASES, INSECTS, ETC.	8. COSTS WILL SKYROCKET
	9. LOCAL ORDINANCE SHOULD BE ADEQUATE

(YES COLUMN CONTINUED . . .)

- 9. STOP THE TOPPING OF TREES
- 10. IMPROVE IMAGE OF THE INDUSTRY
- 11. BETTER DIAGNOSIS OF TREE PROBLEMS
- 12. SET MINIMUM STANDARDS
- 13. SAFETY FOR EMPLOYEES AND PUBLIC

11. Name functions which you feel should be performed only by credentialed arborists.

- CONSULTATION
- FERTILIZATION
- PRUNING
- REMOVALS
- CAVITY REPAIR
- LIGHTNING PROTECTION
- DISEASE AND INSECT TREATMENT
- ALL STATE, CITY OR COUNTY WORK
- CABLING
- TREE SURGERY
- USE OF TREE INJECTION
- SPRAYING

12. How would you describe your clients as to their knowledge of your capabilities and experience?

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 3.8% NONE       | 15.2% VERY LITTLE |
| 27.8% SOME      | 38.0% A LOT       |
| 11.4% EXTREMELY | 3.8% NOT ANSWERED |

13. Would State regulation of arborists provide the public additional assurance of competent and quality service?

- |           |          |                   |
|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| 75.9% YES | 20.3% NO | 3.8% NOT ANSWERED |
|-----------|----------|-------------------|

14. Do you hold any level of certification awarded by a professional organization?

- |           |          |                   |
|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| 72.2% YES | 26.6% NO | 1.3% NOT ANSWERED |
|-----------|----------|-------------------|

15. If yes, was it obtained by an examination?

- |           |         |                    |
|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 68.4% YES | 8.9% NO | 22.8% NOT ANSWERED |
|-----------|---------|--------------------|

APPENDIX E

SURVEYS SENT = 22  
SURVEYS RETURNED = 12

City/County: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:  
Debra Vought  
Department of Commerce  
3600 W. Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23230

### ARBORIST OFFICE SURVEY

1. Does your city/county contract with private tree service companies to maintain your trees?  
66.7% YES                      33.3% NO
  
2. Does your city/county have in-house employees for maintaining your trees?  
66.7% YES                      25.0% NO                      8.3% NOT ANSWERED
  
3. What percentage of the arborists you employ are certified by the International Society of Arboriculture? (RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE PERCENTAGE CHOICES) (8.3% NOT ANSWERED)  
50.0%                      8.3%                      0.0%                      33.3%  
0%-10%                      11%-25%                      26%-50%                      51%-100%
  
4. If in-house arborists are employed, does your city/county carry liability insurance?  
41.7% YES                      8.3% NO                      50.0% NOT ANSWERED  
If yes, what is the annual cost of such coverage?
  
5. Has poor work by an arborist threatened the public health, safety or welfare in your area? (8.3% NOT ANSWERED)  
8.3% YES                      16.7% NO                      66.7% UNCERTAIN
  
6. Do the arborists you employ follow specifications set by the National Arborists Association? (8.3% NOT ANSWERED)  
50.0% YES                      0.0% NO                      41.7% UNCERTAIN

7. What are the most frequent complaints against arborists in your area?

25.0% poor quality work

33.3% unsightly utility line clearance

16.7% improper pruning of trees caused spread of disease

0.0% tree damaged house or other property

0.0% unsafe utility line clearance

8.3% expert opinion of arborist resulted in damage to trees

25.0% other, please explain HIGH COSTS FROM PRIVATE TREE FIRMS, HOMEOWNERS THINK TREES SHOULD BE TOPPED LIKE THOSE DONE BY UNKNOWLEDGEABLE TREE TRIMMERS, WORK NOT COMPLETED ON SCHEDULE

8. In your opinion, is there public demand for the regulation of arborists?

25.0% YES                      16.7% NO                      58.3% UNCERTAIN

9. Would state certification of arborists provide the public assurance of competent and quality service from individuals so certified?

33.3% YES                      8.3% NO                      58.3% UNCERTAIN

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/County: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Debra Vought  
 Department of Commerce  
 3600 West Broad Street  
 Richmond, Virginia 23230

CONSUMER AFFAIRS OFFICE SURVEY

(ARBORISTS)

1. How would you describe the seriousness of problems with arborists? (RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE CHOICES GIVEN)

1	2	2	0	0
NONEXISTENT	MINOR	MODERATE	SEVERE	VERY SEVERE

2. How would you describe the frequency of problems with arborists? (RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE CHOICES GIVEN)

1	3	1	0	0
NEVER	RARELY	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY	CONTINUOUSLY

3. What is the approximate number of complaints against arborists over the past five years?

ONE RESPONSE OF 0  
 ONE RESPONSE OF 3  
 ONE RESPONSE OF 1  
 ONE RESPONSE OF 11  
 ONE RESPONSE OF 50

4. Check the types of complaints received:

- ( 1 ) Pruning of tree caused spread of disease (ONE RESPON
- ( 2 ) Tree damaged house or other property (TWO RESPONSES)
- ( 2 ) Poor quality of work (TWO RESPONSE)
- ( 3 ) Contract term dispute (THREE RESPONSES)
- ( X ) Other (Describe) NO PEDDLARS LICENSE; SHORT MEASURE IN SALE OF FIREWOOD

5. What was the number of investigations as a result of complaints?

1 RESPONSE OF 1  
 1 RESPONSE OF 3  
 1 RESPONSE OF 7



6. What was the number of valid claims found as a result of complaints?

1 RESPONSE OF 1

1 RESPONSE OF 9

7. Are there any other problem areas with arborists that should be addressed through regulation?

ONE RESPONSE OF 0

APPENDIX G

SURVEYS SENT = 4  
SURVEYS RETURNED = 1

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Debra Vought  
Department of Commerce  
3600 West Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia  
23230

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU SURVEY

(ARBORISTS)

1. How would you describe the seriousness of problems with arborists? (RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE CHOICES GIVEN)

0	1	0	0	0
NONEXISTENT	MINOR	MODERATE	SEVERE	VERY SEVERE

2. How would you describe the frequency of problems with arborists? (RESPONSES FOUND ABOVE CHOICES GIVEN)

0	1	0	0	0
NEVER	RARELY	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY	CONTINUOUSLY

3. What is the approximate number of complaints against arborists over the past five years?

ONE RESPONSE OF APPROXIMATELY 10 COMPLAINTS

4. Check the types of complaints received:

- ( ) Pruning of tree caused spread of disease
- ( ) Tree damaged house or other property
- ( 1 ) Poor quality of work (ONE RESPONSE)
- ( ) Contract term dispute
- ( X ) Other (Describe) DELAY IN CONTRACT COMPLETION

5. What was the number of investigations as a result of complaints?

1 RESPONSE OF 0

6. What was the number of valid claims found as a result of complaints?

1 RESPONSE OF APPROXIMATELY 5

7. Are there any other problem areas with arborists that should be addressed through regulation?

ONE RESPONSE OF 0

APPENDIX H

SURVEYS SENT = 69  
SURVEYS RETURNED = 40

Type of Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:  
Debra Vought  
Department of Commerce  
3600 W. Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23230

**SURVEY OF ELECTRIC UTILITIES,  
TELEPHONE AND CABLE TELEVISION COMPANIES**

1. Does your company employ in-house arborists for utility line clearance?

30.0% YES                      67.5% NO                      2.5% NOT ANSWERED

2. Does your company contract with private tree service companies for utility line clearance?

60.0% YES                      40.0% NO

3. What percentage of the arborists you employ are certified by the International Society of Arboriculture? (RESPONSES FOUND ON LINE 1 ABOVE CHOICES FOUND ON LINE 2) (32.5% NOT ANSWERED)

57.5%	5.0%	2.5%	2.5%
0%-10%	11%-25%	26%-50%	51%-100%

4. What specifications for utility line clearance are followed by the arborists you employ?

- RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM 804 SPECIFICATIONS
- COMPANY DEVELOPED STANDARDS
- LATERAL TRIMMING METHOD
- U.S. FOREST SERVICE AND VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS SPECIFICATIONS
- CONSULTATION WITH PROPERTY OWNER
- NATIONAL ARBORIST ASSOCIATION SPECIFICATIONS

5. Has your company developed tree lists of appropriate species of trees (those that do not require continuous trimming) for planting under utility lines?

20.0% YES                      77.5% NO                      2.5% NOT ANSWERED

6. Has your company received consumer complaints about utility line clearance?

50.0% YES                      50.0% NO

7. Please describe the nature of such complaints?
- 7.5% unsightly utility line clearance
  - 0.0% improper pruning of trees caused spread of disease
  - 7.5% not enough clearance to ensure safety
  - 37.5% other, please explain (QUESTION NECESSITY FOR TRIMMING AND FREQUENCY OF TRIMMING; COMPLAINTS OF LIMB ON A LINE OR FALLEN TREE)
8. Do you think arborists performing utility line clearance should be state certified?
- 15.0% YES                      60.0% NO                      25.0% UNCERTAIN
9. Do you think there is public demand for state certification of arborists?
- 7.5% YES                      67.5% NO                      25.0% UNCERTAIN
10. Do you think state certification of arborists would provide the public assurance of competent and quality service from individuals so certified?
- 15.0% YES                      62.5% NO                      22.5% UNCERTAIN
11. What problems, if any, would such certification create for your company?
- INCREASED COST FOR SERVICES; HIGHER ELECTRIC RATES
  - DIFFICULTY IN PROCURING ENOUGH TRIMMERS
  - CERTIFICATION WILL RESULT IN ADDED PAPERWORK
  - CERTIFICATION WOULD AFFECT SERVICE RELIABILITY
  - MORE UNNECESSARY REGULATION
  - NO PROVEN VALUE TO ENVIRONMENT
  - ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR TRAINING
  - DELAYS IN RESTORATION OF SERVICE

APPENDIX I

SURVEYS SENT = 22  
SURVEYS RETURNED = 15

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN TO:  
Debra Vought  
Department of Commerce  
3600 West Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23230

STATE SURVEY  
(ARBORISTS)

1. Does your state regulate arborists?

46.7% YES                      53.3% NO

(If "no," go to question # 3.)

2. What category best describes the regulatory program for arborists in your state? (circle one)

- 0.0%        a) registration - any person may engage in an occupation, but that person must submit certain information to the appropriate authorities.
- 26.7%       b) certification - any person may practice the occupation, but only those who have met certain standards may use the title "Certified Arborist."
- 20.0%       c) licensure - a person is prohibited from engaging in the occupation without meeting certain standards and obtaining a license.

53.3%       NOT ANSWERED

3. How would you describe the frequency of problems with arborists? (circle one)

13.3%	40.0%	26.7%	6.7%	0.0%
NEVER	RARELY	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY	CONTINUOUSLY

13.3% NOT ANSWERED

4. What was the total number of complaints against arborists in your state last year?

60.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
1-25	26-50	51-100	over 100

33.3% NOT ANSWERED

5. Please check the most frequent types of complaints against arborists in your state?

- a) 6.7% tree damaged house or other property
- b) 13.3% improper pruning caused spread of disease
- c) 53.3% poor quality of work
- d) 20.0% unsightly utility line clearance
- e) 0.0% unsafe utility line clearance
- f) 6.7% no liability and property insurance
- g) 20.0% other (please explain) PESTICIDE MISUSE

6. Is regulation of arborists being considered in your state?

13.3% YES                      60.0% NO                      26.7% NOT ANSWERED

APPENDIX J

Public Hearing Participants  
 Richmond, Virginia  
 May 16, 1989

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Position</u>
Bill Poad	Bartlett Tree Experts	Supports certification
Oscar Richardson	Tree Company	Supports certification but concerns about state regulation
Karen Raschke	Virginia Power	Opposes certification of utility line arboriculture
Dan Carson	Appalachian Power	Opposes certification of utility line arborists
Jeff Bond	International Society of Arboriculture	Supports certification with some questions
Mark Fulcher	Bartlett Tree Experts	Opposes certification for utility line arborists
Bud Goehring	Bartlett Tree Experts	Opposes certification for utility line clearance
Ian L. Asplundh	Asplundh Tree Company	Opposes certification
Thomas C. Respet	Penn Line Service	Opposes certification
Jerry Ferguson	Stachouse Inc.	Opposes certification
William F. Keel	Love & Associates	Opposes certification
Philip A. Shaw	American Society of Landscape Architects, Virginia Chapter	Supports certification
John Hubbard	Hubbard Brothers, Inc.	Supports certification
Charles C. Jones, Jr.	Virginia Electric Co-ops	Opposes certification
John King	City Arborist for Chesapeake	Supports certification



<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Position</u>
Chris Lagon	Delmarva Power & Light Company and Potomac Edison Company	Opposes certification
John Muse	George Washington University	Supports certification

APPENDIX K

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED  
TO THE BOARD OF COMMERCE

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
J.M. Reynolds, P.E.	Community Electric Cooperative	Opposes certification
W.R. Fleming	Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative	Opposes additional regulation
Vernon Brinkley	A & N Electric Cooperative	Opposes certification
R.D. Carson, Jr.	Appalachian Power Company	Opposes certification of utility line clearers
B.E. Goehring	Bartlett Tree Experts	Documentation of efforts to assure competence in utility line clearance
Harold J. Coates, Jr.	Virginia Power	Opposes further state regulation; supports ISA certification
Richard L. Hoff	Fairfax County Arborist Office	Supports ISA rather than state certification
Ian L. Asplundh	Asplundh Tree Expert Co.	Opposes state certification
Eugene R. Crisp	Rappahannock Electric Cooperative	Opposes state certification of utility line arborists
Karen A. Raschke	Virginia Power	Supplemental information to hearing testimony
Thomas A. Dick	Virginia, Maryland Delaware Association of Electric Coops	Opposes any state regulation

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
J. Christopher LaGow	Potomac Edison Co. & Delmarva Power & Light Co.	Opposes regulation
Robert P. Kelley	Richmond Professional Grounds Management Society	Supports state certification
R. Jay Stipes, Ph.D.	Virginia Polytechnic and State University	Supports state certification
John Hubbard	Hubbard Brothers, Inc. Tree Consultants	Supports state certification
Candace W. Allen	Virginia Department of Forestry	Supports certification
Leon E. App		Submitted ISA Code of Ethics, etc.

APPENDIX J

Public Hearing Participants  
 Richmond, Virginia  
 May 16, 1989

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Position</u>
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Jeff Bond	International Society of Arboriculture	Supports certification with some questions
Mark Fulcher	Bartlett Tree Experts	Opposes certification for utility line arborists
Bud Goehring	Bartlett Tree Experts	Opposes certification for utility line clearance
Ian L. Asplundh	Asplundh Tree Company	Opposes certification
Thomas C. Respet	Penn Line Service	Opposes certification
Jerry Ferguson	Stachouse Inc.	Opposes certification
William F. Keel	Love & Associates	Opposes certification
Philip A. Shaw	American Society of Landscape Architects, Virginia Chapter	Supports certification
John Hubbard	Hubbard Brothers, Inc.	Supports certification
Charles C. Jones, Jr.	Virginia Electric Co-ops	Opposes certification
John King	City Arborist for Chesapeake	Supports certification

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Position</u>
Chris Lagow	Delmarva Power & Light Company and Potomac Edison Company	Opposes certification
John Muse	George Washington University	Supports certification

APPENDIX K

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED  
TO THE BOARD OF COMMERCE

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
J.M. Reynolds, P.E.	Community Electric Cooperative	Opposes certification
W.R. Fleming	Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative	Opposes additional regulation
Vernon Brinkley	A & N Electric Cooperative	Opposes certification
R.D. Carson, Jr.	Appalachian Power Company	Opposes certification of utility line clearers
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