

THE PURDUE LANDSCAPE REPORT

Why Tree Inspections?

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Review trees on a regular basis for health and safety.

Trees provide many benefits for our homes with shade, beauty and improved air quality as just a few, however, if a tree has defects which could lead to a failure, your shade tree could become a liability. It is important to understand that tree owners have a legal duty to inspect and maintain their trees. All property owners should take reasonable steps to protect themselves and others by taking a look at trees around the property on a regular basis. Here are some suggestions to consider in making your trees safer for everyone.

Reduce Tree Liabilities: In general, the law obligates tree owners to periodically inspect their property and take reasonable care to maintain it and this includes trees. Routine inspections also exhibit that the tree owner is actively managing their property and trees and thereby reduces their liability if a failure does occur.



Understanding tree health and risk is challenging for tree owners. It is best to find an ISA Certified Arborist to help with identifying tree issues.

When it comes to trees, it's best to have a professional conduct risk and tree health assessments if there is any uncertainty. However, Homeowners can look for tree defects, including dead branches, broken limbs, decay pockets or other conditions that reduce a tree's strength. Review the tree from the top, down. Look at the tree's crown, main branches, trunk and root area to see if there is anything abnormal. If you find easily recognizable defects like dead and falling branches, cavities, fungal fruiting bodies or newly-formed leans on a tree, consider having the tree examined by a certified arborist. This is especially important after a severe storm. Trees can easily survive normal weather conditions for many years, however, excessive winds can have a real impact. Make certain trees aren't removed prematurely out of fear without making an informed decision along with the arborist.

Schedule Tree Work: If risk or health issues are found during the inspection, schedule the tree work with a qualified arborist. Be sure to find a tree care company in the area that is reputable and can provide references. Also, being fully insured is another important item to be aware when choosing an arborist. To find an arborist in your area, go to the website, www.treesaregood.org.

Inspection on a regular basis: Trees should be inspected regularly. These inspections should occur during the growing season and dormancy. Further inspections should be conducted after major weather occurrences. At a minimum, trees should be inspected every five years by an arborist, especially if there is decline and dieback present in your trees.



Look for unusual fungal growths on your trees. This indicates decay which can lead to a higher risk of failure.



Recent leans developing on trees may be corrected, however, they do pose a risk and should be inspected by an arborist.

For more information, see FNR-FAQ12-W Trees and Storms and FNR-475-W Tree Risk Management.

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