



Safety Tip of the Week

Tree Work and Pruning Operations

Spring is the time of year that many home and business owners request tree services such as tree removal, trimming, and pruning. During the winter, heavy ice and snow, and during the spring, high winds and rain can cause downed trees and power lines. Caution is especially necessary when cleaning up or tree trimming during extreme weather and in areas around energized lines.

Tree Workers

Tree work is dangerous, often resulting in fall and struck-by injuries. Arborists face many job hazards such as gas-powered equipment (e.g. chainsaws and woodchippers), working at heights, and falling trees and branches. Laws vary by state, but in general, electric utility companies must maintain the safety of their lines by trimming and removing trees near the path of high voltage power lines.



Tree Trimming Safety Tips

- Perform a hazard assessment before any tree work.
- Always assume that power lines are energized.
- Use necessary PPE such as gloves, safety glasses, hard hats, hearing and fall protection/harness.
- Ground personnel should stay clear of the fall radius of branches.
- Be aware of felling direction.
- Notch the tree properly on the fall side before cutting the back to release the pressure.
- Never climb with anything (e.g. tools, equipment) in your hands.
- Any tree trimming within ten feet of a power line must be done by trained line-clearance tree trimmers. A second tree trimmer must be within voice range any time a person is cutting above.

When tree work must be done, worker health and safety should come first, especially when working near power lines in the aftermath of severe weather events. Don't take a risk when it comes to safety. Make sure you receive training by your employer on the job, equipment, safety practices and PPE, and that they answer any questions you have.

TREE WORK IS UNPREDICTABLE...PREPARE FOR THE LEAST EXPECTED!