

## When to Hire an Arborist

Well cared for trees can contribute up to 20 percent to your property's value, so investing in proper tree care is money well spent. Tree experts, known as Arborists, provide a variety of services to help you care for your trees.

A Certified Arborist is a tree care professional with experience and education. They have at least 18 months of experience, have passed a rigorous exam on tree identification and care, and are required to earn 30 hours of continuing education every three years. An arborist can determine what type of pruning is required to maintain or improve the health, appearance, and safety of your trees. Services offered by arborists range from consultation only to full-service diagnosis, treatment and maintenance.

An Arborist should always be consulted when:

- There is storm damage that requires the removal or trimming of hazardous trees
- A tree is located within 10 feet of a power line and needs to be pruned.
- The removal of a tree is an issue. There may be alternatives to heaved sidewalks that will allow the tree to remain in place to provide coveted shade in our desert climate.
- The tree in question has historic significance.

## Selection

A Certified Arborist will always carry identification. Ask for references. Request to have a certificate of insurance including proof of liability furnished. The Arizona Industrial Commission can verify Workers Compensation insurance coverage. A company with more than one person working on your property must carry all state-required insurances. Under some circumstances you can be held financially responsible if an uninsured worker is hurt on your property, or damage is done to a resident's property.

Have more than one arborist give you an estimate. A good arborist should be knowledgeable in all areas of tree care, but may specialize in one or two. They should not use climbing spikes or be eager to remove living trees. The pruning techniques they use will have the health and integrity of the tree in mind rather than indiscriminate removal of plant parts.

## The Contract

Avoid misunderstandings by using a contract that addresses your expectations. Read the document carefully and consult legal counsel if you have questions. Be sure to include:

- The date service is to begin and end.
- The specific work to be done.
- The standards used for the work done. Example: ANSI Z133 Safety Standards and ISA Pruning Standards.
- The specific list of chemicals, fertilizer or treatment to be used along with location.
- When and what clean up work will be done.
- Who (or what group) will get firewood.
- Whether the stump will be removed or ground.
- The exact dollar amount to be charged.

## Other Titles

Certified Tree Worker. Certified by ISA, passed a written and oral exam, practical exam on climbing and pruning skills. Continuing education required.

Consulting Arborist: Anyone may call themselves a consulting arborist. Membership in American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) is not required

For more information contact:

International Society of Arboriculture (ISA): Offers two levels of certification: Certified Arborist and Certified Tree Worker. From the ISA web site you can verify certification or find arborists in your zip code. (217) 355-9411 <http://www.isa-arbor.com/>

National Arborists Association (NAA) Membership is comprised of commercial tree care service firms. Provides standards for pruning, cabling and other techniques. (800) 733-2622 <http://www.natlarb.com/>

#### Publications

AZ1003 – How to Hire a Tree Expert. University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cooperative Extension. <http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/garden/az1003.pdf>

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