

Ottiger Tree Service, LLC Spring Tree Care Tips



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Volume 3, Issue 1

In Celebration of Arbor Day

Take Care of the Trees and Plants in Your Own Backyard

Does Your Yard Have A Health Plan?

When is the last time your yard had a check-up? Just like people, trees and plants need periodic examinations and treatments to help prolong their health. Plant health care (PHC) is a vital part of landscape management. Preventative care, frequent check-ups, early detection, informed decision-making, and routine treatments that provide long term, stable solutions are regular duties of PHC programs. A PHC plan is multi-faceted and customer-driven, focusing on the health, growth, and beauty of a homeowner's yard.

"It's like an HMO plan for your yard," says Jim Skiera, Executive Director for the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). "Adopting a plant healthcare program can prevent problems or keep them from getting serious. When homeowners and professionals work together, everyone benefits. Drastic, costly maintenance can be avoided while the value of the entire property increases." The basic premise behind PHC is that if a plant is taken care of properly, natural defenses can be strengthened. Energy that would normally be used up fighting stressful factors can instead be utilized to build up defense systems. Regular check-ups and the removal of hazardous factors from the environment help to improve the health of a plant, the same as they would the health of a human.

Maintaining a Plant Health Care (PHC) Program:

First, choose the right professional support. You would select a doctor carefully, so be sure to select the best professional to assist you in your PHC plan. Experts should ask questions, determine priorities, and discover the homeowner's expectations. Look for ISA Certified Arborists, like us (found at www.treesaregood.org) or certified landscape professionals who are well-trained, educated, and experienced professionals familiar with landscape plants, their needs, and the pests and diseases most likely to attack.



Andrew Koeser, ISA, Bugwood.org

Every yard is different, so individual care is important. Frequent monitoring aids in early detection and is key to the long-term health of plants.

Professionals will alert you to any existing or anticipated problems then suggest all possible treatment options and alternatives-just like a doctor would a patient. The best choices usually involve natural processes that are least intrusive. Chemical treatments should be used as a last resort. Homeowners and professionals should work together to decide what is best for the yard.

Expensive remedies are often employed after a yard has already been badly damaged. These practices are often unsuccessful and cost homeowners significant amounts of money in planting and maintenance. Proactive PHC programs cost considerably less than reactive interventions because they help ensure the health and beauty of plants and landscapes, lowering maintenance costs and increasing property values.

"The long-term savings is virtually guaranteed," Skiera says. "Not only will a plant health care program enhance the well-being of plants, but it also will improve the mood and bank account of the homeowner."

This information is provided by The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Headquartered in Champaign, Ill., the ISA is a nonprofit organization supporting tree care research and education around the world.



Our Mission:

We are dedicated to maintaining the balance between tree health, customer safety & satisfaction, and raising the standards of the arboriculture industry.

Membership Affiliations:

St. Louis Arborist Association
www.stlouisarborists.com

Tree Care Industry Association
www.tcia.org

International Society of Arboriculture
www.isa-arbor.com

Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org

Missouri's Arbor Day! April 1st!



Send this free e-card from
www.arborday.org



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Call for an Estimate Today!

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Ottiger Tree Service (OTS) offers tree/brush removal, pruning and dead wooding to the greater St. Louis area.

We are a first-generation, family-owned business, and proud of our reputation as a dependable and quality-oriented arbor care services company.

With ISA Certified Arborists on staff, we are staying up-to-date on the latest techniques and information since these professionals pass extensive exams covering all aspects of tree care and have continuing education requirements to maintain certification and accreditation.

WINTER/SPRING Storms Damage Your Trees?

Winter and spring storms cause tremendous stress and severe damage to trees in the urban forest. Obviously, a snapped or downed tree should be removed. What about a tree that suffers minor damage? How can a homeowner tell if a tree is safe?

Assessing the Damage

Minor damage – with only the smallest branches of the tree being injured – usually results in little or no permanent injury to the tree. All that is required is cleanup of the broken twigs and branches and perhaps a crown cleaning or thinning prune to restore a pleasing shape.

More severe damage – large broken branches, split crotches, removal of bark and splitting or splintering of the trunk – can be caused by strong winds and heavy ice storms. When a tree is severely damaged, the first question that must be answered is: “Is the condition of the tree such that keeping it is worthwhile?” A tree care professional should be consulted to answer this question.

“Most arborists will take the time and effort to save a tree only if the tree will still be healthy, attractive, and of value to the property owner after repairs,” explains Tchukki Andersen, staff arborist for the Tree Care Industry Association. “A tree care expert may recommend removal of a tree that has brittle wood and a branch structure that makes it vulnerable to additional damage from future storms. Trees that have been topped by storms are prime candidates for removal,” says Andersen.

Other factors to consider when determining if a tree is worth saving:

- species • age • growing location
- value it adds to the property • sentimental value

If a tree is not worth saving, remove it as soon as possible. If it is not removed and the tree dies, it could become a hazard tree. Removal of hazard trees is dangerous to the tree care crew and requires special techniques, adding to the cost.



Treating the Tree

Assuming the decision has been made to repair the tree, the next question is: “Am I capable of repairing the damage myself or should I seek professional help?” Major repair will undoubtedly require the use of a chain saw and climbing equipment. Unless one is experienced in the use of such equipment and comfortable working off the ground, it may be best to have the work performed by a competent professional, such as Ottiger Tree Service.

Inspect your trees for damage after a storm. If a tree has hazards, such as broken, hanging limbs, or a split branch union (sometimes called a branch fork), you should call us to give you an assessment. This is important because you could be held liable if the hazard branch or tree falls and damages property or causes personal injury.

Information provided by:



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN CELEBRATES ARBOR DAY WITH FREE TREE GIVEAWAY

WHEN: Friday, Apr. 1 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or while supplies last

WHERE: William T. Kemper Center for Home Gardening at the Missouri Botanical Garden, 4344 Shaw Blvd

COST: Included with Garden admission of \$8 adults; \$4 St. Louis City/County residents. Free children ages 12 and under.

INFO: www.mobot.org; (314) 577-5100

WHAT: In celebration of Arbor Day, plant a tree for free! The Missouri Botanical Garden will again mark the state's celebration on Friday, Apr. 1 by giving away 600 tree saplings to visitors on a first-come, first-served basis. Northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*) and flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) saplings will be available at the William T. Kemper Center for Home Gardening from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or while supplies last. Master Gardeners will also be on-hand to answer questions and give advice on planting trees in the spring.