



# TREE NEWS

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## HIRING THE RIGHT TREE CARE COMPANY, PART 1: PRUNING

Hiring a qualified tree care professional is important to get the best care possible for your trees. An important starting point is to have a clear understanding of the services provided by the firm. Communication is key to getting the most for your money.

The company you choose should establish a written pruning work plan that clearly states what your desired objectives are and how they will be accomplished. This is key to a successful outcome!

A qualified tree care company should have a number of credentials based on their knowledge and capabilities. Liability and workers' compensation insurance, business licenses, and certifications are benchmarks of a qualified professional in the tree care industry. To find a qualified tree care company, visit [www.treesaregood.org](http://www.treesaregood.org). This website provides homeowners with the tools to verify a tree company's credentials, provides a national database of certified arborists, and describes tree care basics.

Look for an arborist who holds a certification with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Certified arborists will have knowledge of the pruning standards set out by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in their A300 Standard for Pruning.

Pruning objectives should be set prior to beginning any pruning job. You and your arborist should spend time discussing your concerns and desires, and they should be able to help you identify needs that you may not be aware of through their understanding of the tree species and different pruning types. Your arborist should be able to communicate about the growth cycles of trees and have an understanding that no more than 25% of the live foliage from your trees should be removed in an annual growing season. Remember, your pruning objectives will also become a work plan that guides the crew when they come to perform the work; therefore, having a clear understanding between you and your arborist serves several very important purposes. In general, you and your arborist will be discussing maintenance pruning objectives. Within the broad topic of maintenance pruning, there are four types of pruning, which we will discuss next month!



When hiring a company to work on your trees, look for ones that have certifications with ISA, TCIA, and/or BBB.

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