



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Take precautions when hiring tree services to help with storm cleanup

RICHMOND, Va. – After significant storms, such as the recent hurricane Irene, individuals with pickup trucks and chainsaws who call themselves tree specialists often cruise through neighborhoods and knock on people’s doors offering “cheap” tree cleanup.

Generally, trees need to be removed or trimmed by a qualified professional to lessen long-term damage to the tree and surrounding property. Finding a qualified tree service is important protection for the homeowner. Knowing how to hire a reputable arborist can help prevent becoming a victim all over again.

A professionally trained arborist can determine if a tree can be saved. Even if the tree must be removed, safety and training are still needed to prevent additional damage from the removal. Most chainsaw injuries occur during storm cleanup.

In a time of disaster, a fast recovery is desirable, but not taking the time to hire a reputable tree service may create greater problems in the future. The worst result of haste may be paying in advance for tree work that is never completed. The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) offers these tips on hiring an arborist:

- **Certification**-Ask if the arborists on staff hold ISA certification. ISA offers a range of certification credentials from Certified Tree Worker/Climber Specialist to Board Certified Master Arborist. To be certified, individuals must pass a voluntary comprehensive exam.
- **Professional Affiliation**-Ask about membership in professional organizations, such as the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and/or one of its chapters, the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) or the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA).
- **Advertisement**- Check the local yellow pages directory or newspaper for arborists who list themselves as ISA Certified Arborists or who display the official logos of professional membership. Also look for logos of business accreditation by organizations, such as The Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), who requires they have an ISA Certified Arborist on staff. Or visit www.goodtreecare.com to find a local Certified Arborist.

- **Insurance-** Ask for proof of insurance and then verify coverage with the insurance company. A reputable arborist should have insurance to cover personal and property damage as well as worker's compensation. If you hire an uninsured tree expert, you can be held liable for any damages or injuries that occur while they are on the job.
- **References-** Ask for references from past customers and do not hesitate to check them.
- **Estimates-** Don't be afraid to ask for a written estimate, and it is ok to get more than one estimate. Take the time to be an informed consumer and prevent yourself from becoming victimized.
- **Do not pay for the job until everything agreed upon is completed.**

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