



City of Brooklyn Center
Building & Community Standards
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Tips for Hiring a Tree Contractor

Trees can add to your property value and the expense of proper care is one of the best investments you can make. Choosing a contractor for tree service and maintenance should be done with careful consideration. The right choice can assure health, beauty and longer life for your trees. The City of Brooklyn Center requires that all tree service companies are registered with the city. This requirement assures that the company you hire has proper liability for personal and property damage and worker's compensation insurance. City staff may not recommend specific contractors. However, a list of registered tree contractors is available on the City website at www.cityofbrooklyncenter.org.

What to Do Before Selecting a Contractor

When hiring a tree contractor to work on your property, be sure you have a contract that is complete and clear. The following items should be considered:

- ✓ Review the list of tree contractors registered with the City of Brooklyn Center.
- ✓ Are they a Certified Arborist with the ISA (International Society of Arboriculture)?
- ✓ Beware of door-knockers. Most reputable companies do not go door to door soliciting business.
- ✓ Don't be rushed by bargains and never pay in advance of a contract.
- ✓ Ask for local references and talk with former clients.
- ✓ Obtain estimates from more than one contractor. Prices and quality of services can vary significantly by contractor and by the job.
- ✓ Verify the contractor and employees are bonded and insured. This includes personal and property damage insurance as well as worker's compensation insurance.
- ✓ "Topping" a tree is not recommended. The process can be harmful and does not foster long term care of a healthy tree. A topped tree is more likely to suffer from stress and become vulnerable to damage, insects and disease. An Arborist can determine the best methods to reduce the height of a tree to preserve the tree's natural beauty, health and safety for the environment.

What to Do Before Signing a Contract

Once you have selected a contractor, a written contract or written agreement is essential and should include the following:

- ✓ The dates that work will begin and end.
- ✓ Detailed outline of the work to be performed including cleanup.
- ✓ Clarification if work includes grinding out the stump, surface roots and filling the hole with topsoil.
- ✓ Total dollar amount you will be charged.
- ✓ Inquire about the contractor's safety standards.
- ✓ Check with the Better Business Bureau regarding the company's business practices at www.minnesota.bbb.org.

For more information, please visit the City's website at www.cityofbrooklyncenter.org including...

- *Diseased and Dead Tree Regulations* – City Handout
- *Options for Tree Removal* – City Handout
- MNTrees.org by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources