



WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Shade Tree Commission

DO'S AND DON'TS WITH STORM DAMAGED TREES

West Windsor has been “hit” with significant storms and hurricane season is far from over. It is therefore timely to remind residents what they should and should not do when their trees are damaged by storms:

DON'T shelter under a tree during a thunder storm. If you hear thunder, lightning is closer than you might think.

DO stay far away from downed power lines, cables or anything they may be touching – particularly metal fences, puddles, other trees and vehicles that may be electrified.

DO assume all power lines and cables are live.

DON'T touch or try to prune a broken branch that is within 10 feet of a live power line.

DO report blocked roadways and house damage promptly to local police / emergency services.

DON'T try to clean up storm damage on your own if there is any risk of injury.

DO put up with a large hanging branch until a qualified and properly equipped arborist is available.

DO avoid scam artists who show up with chain saws and try to take advantage of you after a storm. It is now MANDATORY to hire a tree care business that is registered with the State of NJ and has employed a Licensed Tree Expert or Licensed Tree Care Operator, depending on the services they offer for hire. It is important to make sure that the person is qualified to do tree work and fully insured in case an accident happens.

DO prune stubs of broken branches in the approved manner – close to the trunk or main stem but not so that you damage nearby bark. Avoid “coat hooks”. Repair damaged bark by trimming.

DON'T block street drains with branches while waiting for yard waste collection.

DON'T attempt to restore the shape of a tree that has suffered the loss of its main stem by pruning lateral branches. The result will probably be disappointing and potentially dangerous. Consult a qualified arborist who understands how the tree will react to damage and pruning.

DO follow up a month or two after a storm to check for and remedy tree damage or decay which may have been hidden by leaves or branches and which could be a hazard in a future storm.

DO remember that trees are living and complex. Like people, they change as they age, are impacted by their environment and do not live forever. Treating them well will promote health and longevity. They will reward your tender care.

West Windsor Shade Tree Commission

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