



The Connecticut Tree Protective Association, Inc.

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Hire an arborist and avoid liability!

When you hire someone to do tree care work there are a few things you should keep in mind. What happens if an accident occurs causing property damage or injuring a worker? If the contractor is not properly licensed and insured, you just might expose yourself to a lot of personal liability.

“It’s true”, says Don Parrott of the Connecticut Tree Protective Association. “Homeowners need to understand that when they hire an arborist to work on their trees the individual needs to be licensed by the State of Connecticut and the tree care company needs to be properly insured. If the company is not in compliance and an accident happens on the job, the homeowner very likely will be the one to lose financially.”

If a worker is injured on the job and the employer has no coverage in place or the coverage is inadequate to cover the injury, the injured party enters into litigation to settle the claim. The legal system will include the homeowner. “The damage will get compensated one way or the other and it’s just a matter of who has the deepest pockets”, notes Don Parrott.

Connecticut law states that no one shall “advertise, solicit or contract to do arboriculture within this state” without a license. That license ensures that the arborist has shown a standard level of competency in current arboricultural practices and maintains that competency through continuing education. “Our industry continually learns new and better techniques to take care of trees” adds Don Parrott. “By having the arborist license in place, we increase the chances for better care of the trees in Connecticut.”

In these challenging economic times we all want a bargain when arranging for work. Usually, though, a company’s bargain price comes at the expense of cutting too many corners. “A tree care company can’t get away without appropriate insurance, foregoing an arborist license or operating in an unprofessional manner,” notes Don Parrott. “It might be tempting to hire the bargain company, but that decision comes with its own downsides. It makes good sense for the tree trimmer to operate professionally and it makes good sense for the homeowner to hire a professional company, too.”

How to verify that an individual is properly licensed and properly insured:

- Ask the individual for proof of his or her Connecticut Arborist License
- Contact the CT DEP Pesticide Management Program and ask them if the individual is licensed (860-424-3369)
- Ask to be given a certificate of insurance with current coverage limits
- Ask for a written proposal that specifies what work will be done
- Check professional affiliations such as the CTPA, ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) and TCIA (Tree Care Industry Association)
- Ask for references.

For more information on tree care and why you should hire a licensed arborist, visit www.ctpa.org.