

While Arboriculture is not regulated, there are standards and best practices that reputable Arborists should follow. Here is a list of just a few **UNACCEPTABLE** practices:



**Flush Cuts:** Flush cuts are cuts made too close to the trunk. This creates opportunity for decay and slows the tree being able to recover from the wound.

**Stub cut:** A pruning cut too far from the

branch collar delays closure of the wound and therefore acts as an entry point for diseases and pathogens.

**Tree climbing spurs:** Tree climbing spurs should only be used when removing trees and not when pruning. Tree spurs damage trees and cause undo damage.

**Free climbing:** Tree workers need to utilize proper climbing equipment to safely access and work with in a tree. At no time should they be unsecured while aloft. This includes work performed in a aerial device (Bucket Truck).

**Lion tailing:** Lion tailing describes the improper pruning technique of removing all interior growth in a tree and leaving only leaf material at the end. This can be harmful to the health and structure of the tree.

**Topping:** Topping is an inappropriate technique of reducing a tree's size by indiscriminately cutting and shortening the stem(s). This can cause internal decay and structural weakness.

*The Tree Care Industry doesn't accept this and neither should you.*

When hiring an Arborist here is a list of things you can ask for:

- Liability Insurance;
- Worker Disability Insurance (or WSIB);
- Professional Credentials;
- Testimonials;
- Ensure you receive a written quotation that specifically outlines all aspects of the project, i.e. size of wood to be pruned, cleanup required etc., in this way you can be sure that the quotes you are comparing cover the same things;
- Professional affiliations.



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# Hiring an Arborist



When hiring a contractor to perform tree care or service on your property there are important issues you should consider:

- Arboriculture is the profession of tree care & service;
- Arboriculture is a highly technical profession;
- Arboriculture can be dangerous and can include many life threatening hazards;
- Unlike Electricians or Plumbers, Arboriculture is not a regulated trade in Ontario;
- Property owners need to ensure their Arboricultural contractor has the skill and knowledge to safely perform tree care or service.

*This brochure provides information to help property owners or managers to protect themselves, their property and workers from accident.*

## Insurance:

Ensure the contractor you hire not only has insurance, but has the right insurance. If an accident occurs on your property the actual land owner may be liable for costs if the contractor's insurance is insufficient. Always ask for proof of insurance and coverage terms.

- ❑ **Liability Insurance.** This insurance serves to protect the property owner in case the contractor is found legally responsible for injuries or damages resulting from an accident.
- ❑ **Worker Disability Insurance.** The Ontario Workplace Safety & Insurance Act governs worker injuries and requires property owners to share in the liabilities which uninsured injured workers experience. This risk makes it gravely important to ensure contractors have a valid Worker Disability Insurance policy in order to protect all parties from financial loss.
- ❑ **Errors and Omissions Insurance.** Professional Insurance to protect property owners from financial loss where a contractor may be found legally responsible for shortfalls in professional conduct in accordance with professional standards.

## Credentials:

Arboriculture is a profession not regulated in Ontario. This provides opportunity for a property owner to unknowingly hire a contractor who is not adequately skilled or knowledgeable in Arboriculture. Ensuring that your contractor is qualified to perform tree care or service can be one of the hardest things to determine.

Without regulated standards for Arboriculture, it is wise to start with the Ministry of Labour's definition of a competent person:

*A person who:*

- a. is qualified because of knowledge, training and experience to organize the work and its performance;
- b. is familiar with this Act and the regulations that apply to the work; and
- c. has knowledge of any potential or actual danger to health or safety in the workplace? [s. 1(1), OHS]

Despite a lack of Provincial Regulation in Ontario, there are credentialing organizations which provide contractors with other means to acquire and prove competence.

Here are some of the credentials that may help to ensure competency in Arboriculture.

*International Society of Arboriculture:*

- ISA Board Certified Master Arborist®
- ISA Certified Arborist®
- ISA Certified Tree Worker™

- ISA Utility Arborist™
- ISA Municipal Arborist®
- ISA TRAQ (Tree Risk Assessment Qualification)

*College or Diploma Programs*

- Humber College, Sir Sanford Fleming College, Algonquin College, Niagara College

*Ontario College of Trades*

- Arborist Apprenticeship Program
- Utility Arborist Apprenticeship Program

*Tree Care Industry Association*

- Certified Tree Care Safety Professional (CTSP)
- TCIA Accreditation

*ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:*

For more information on hiring an arborist or to find an ISA Certified Arborist go to [www.treesaregood.com](http://www.treesaregood.com)

City of Toronto Forestry: [www1.toronto.ca](http://www1.toronto.ca) - Search "Why Hire an Arborist"

Ontario Urban Forestry Council: [www.oufc.org](http://www.oufc.org)