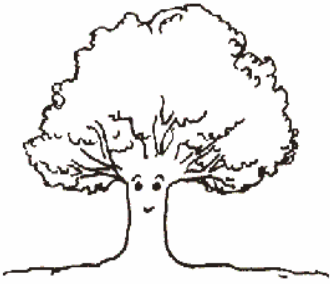


4 REASONS WE NEVER TOP TREES



What's wrong with topping?

Topping dramatically shortens the lifespan of trees and creates hazardous trees in high-traffic areas.

1. IT WON'T WORK

Topping won't work to keep trees small. After a deciduous tree is topped, its growth rate increases. It grows back rapidly in an attempt to replace its missing leaf area. It needs all of its leaves so that it can manufacture food for the trunk and roots. It won't slow down until it reaches about the same size it was before it was topped. It takes at maximum a few years before your tree returns to near its original size. An exception to the grow-back-to-size rule comes if you damage a tree's health so it hasn't the strength to re-establish itself. It is, in effect, dying and will continue on a downward spiral for years.



2. IT IS EXPENSIVE

A topped tree must be done and re-done every few years-and eventually must be removed when it dies or the owner gives up. Each time a branch is cut; numerous long, skinny young shoots (called suckers) grow rapidly back to replace it. people create maintenance monsters in their back yards. A properly pruned tree stays "done" longer, since the work does not stimulate an upsurge of re-growth. Proper pruning actually improves the health and beauty of a tree, costing you less in the long run. Topping also reduces the appraised value of your tree. A tree, like any landscape amenity, adds to the value of your property.

3. IT IS UGLY



The sight of a topped tree is offensive to many people. The freshly sawed-off tree limbs are reminiscent of arm or leg amputations. And the freshly-sawed look is just the beginning of the eyesore; the worst is yet to come, as the tree re-grows a witch's broom of ugly, straight suckers and sprouts.

The natural beauty of the tree's crown is a function of the uninterrupted taper from the trunk to ever finer and more delicate branches, and the regular division of the branches. Topping destroys the winter silhouette of a tree. The re-growth of suckers or shoots will bloom poorly, if at all.

4. IT IS DANGEROUS

Topping is the most serious injury you can inflict upon your tree. Severe topping and repeat topping can set up internal columns of rotten wood, which may show up years later in conjunction with a drought or other stress. Ironically, many people top their trees because they think it will make them safer. Topping creates hazardous trees:

IT STARVES THE TREE: Very simply, a tree's leaves manufacture its food. Repeated removal of the tree's leaves-its food source-literally starves the tree. This makes it susceptible to secondary diseases such as root rot---a common cause of failing trees.

CAUSES WEAK LIMBS: New limbs made from the sucker or shoot re-growth are weakly attached and break easily in wind or snow storms-even many years later when they are large and heavy. A re-grown limb never has the structural integrity of the original.



REASONS FOR POTENTIAL TREE DEATH FROM TOPPING: Personally, I think they die from embarrassment