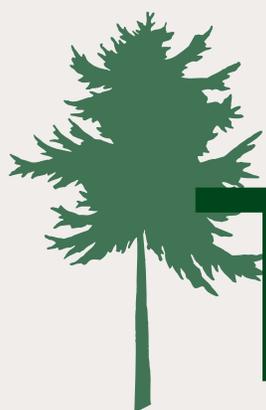




# Branchin' Out



News  
from the

## Top

News & Advice from Gary Allen,  
President of Allen's Tree Service



Here at Allen's Tree Service Inc. we follow the Tree Care Industry Standards for all of our tree services. These guidelines are available to any of the tree care companies that are a part of the Tree Care Industry Association. The guidelines follow the ANSI Standards in all aspects of tree care, including, but not limited to: removals, pruning, fertilizing, planting, and safety.

In our October issue of Branchin' Out, we introduced our newest division of Allen's Tree Service Inc., Complete Tree & Lawn Care. This program will be individually tailored to meet your lawn and landscape needs. We will offer: grass cutting, edging, trimming, fertilizing, aeration, overseeding, weed and crab grass

control, insect control, leaf removal, mulching, landscape bed maintenance, and many other services.

Your lawn is unique and one-of-a-kind, with its own set of needs and requirements, which is why you need an integrated lawn care plan. We would be happy to send out one of our professional lawn care specialists to do an evaluation of your landscape. We have received an overwhelming response from our current customers who are interested in having the same company take care of their entire landscape, the trees and the turf. We look forward to not only being your Tree Service, but your Complete Tree and Lawn Service.

We take pride in knowing that we offer the best care that is available in this area. Our crews and staff are trained and educated on the proper techniques. By keeping our employees up to date with training and education it enables us to pass this information on to our client's so they can make educated decisions about the type of tree and lawn care they receive. We want to be the only company that you need to call for all of your landscaping needs.

### Advantages of Lawn & Landscape Maintenance

As our lifestyles become busier with demands from family, jobs, hobbies, kids, etc, we find ourselves with less and less time to work in our lawns, much less maintain our lawns with fertilizing, weed and insect control, mowing and trimming, etc. With this in mind, we are the ones to call for all of your lawn and landscaping needs. We can relieve much of the burden, because we are a full service lawn and landscape company. We can maintain your lawn doing everything from mowing and trimming to fertilizing and weed control, mulching and shrub maintenance, and our tree service crews can handle all the pruning, deadwooding, removals, and fertilizing, and insect and disease control for the trees in your landscape. We have the knowledge, the proper equipment and experienced educated personnel to do the job completely and efficiently.

### In this Issue:

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- Florel Sweetgum Ball Eliminator
- Fertilize or Don't?
- Planting a Tree
- Yearly Maintenance Calendar
- Storm Damage

## Right Time to Plant

Trees can be planted almost any time of the year as long as the ground is not frozen. The ideal time to plant trees or shrubs is during the late summer or the dormant season; in fall after leaf-drop. The second choice for planting is late winter or early spring, when weather conditions are cool and allow plants to establish roots in the new location before spring rains and summer heat stimulate new top growth.

We usually think of planting trees in the spring rather than in the fall, but there may be some advantages to fall planting. During the spring, soils are cold and may be so wet that low oxygen levels inhibit root growth. Fall root growth means the tree becomes established well before a spring planted tree and is better able to withstand summer stresses. Certain trees do not produce significant root growth during the fall which are better planted in the spring. These trees include beech, birch, redbud, magnolia, tulip poplar, willow oak, scarlet oak, black oak, willows and dogwoods. Fall planted trees require some special care. Remember, that roots are actively growing even though the top of the tree is dormant.

Evergreens should be moved earlier in the fall than deciduous plants. They need at least six weeks before the ground freezes for the roots to become established. Planting in hot summer weather should be avoided. Planting in frozen soil during the winter is difficult and tough on tree roots which should be avoided. When the tree is dormant and the ground is frozen, there is no opportunity for the growth of new roots. However, trees properly cared for in the nursery or garden center when given the appropriate care during transport to prevent damage can be planted throughout the growing season.

Before you begin planting your tree, be sure to have all underground utilities located prior to digging. If the tree you are planting is balled and burlapped, it is important to understand that the tree's root system has been reduced by 90-95% of its original size during transplanting. A result of the trauma caused by the digging process is known as "transplant shock". Transplant shock is indicated by slow growth and reduced vigor following transplanting. Proper site preparation before and during planting and good follow-up care will reduce the amount of time the plant experiences transplant shock that will allow the tree to establish quickly in its new location.

## FLOREL: Sweetgum Ball Eliminator

*It's time to contact the office to get signed up for the sweetgum ball eliminator for the sweetgum trees. The month of April is when the trees are at the right stage of development to be sprayed for maximum control. The Florel spray does not completely eliminate all of the sweetgum balls on the trees, and the trees do have to be sprayed every year. The Florel usually reduces the amount of sweetgum balls on your tree the first year it is sprayed by approximately 40%, the more consecutive years the tree is sprayed the higher rate of control is achieved.*

*If you have previously had your trees sprayed with the Florel Sweetgum Ball Eliminator, you will automatically be put on our list for this year, sign up sheets for previous customers will be mailed soon.*

*If you have not had your trees sprayed in the past, please call the office as soon as possible so we can have one of our estimators, or certified arborist out to inspect your trees for spraying this year.*

*There is limited time for this service, so we do try to accommodate as many customers as possible, we do have to schedule the jobs on a first come, first serve basis. So, call the office soon to get signed up.*

## Fertilize or Don't?

There is much controversy and disagreement regarding the application of tree fertilizers in the landscape. Here's the reality: trees in the forest get their nutrients from the nutrient recycling of the forest litter, rotting leaves, twigs, etc. Generally speaking, in the landscape, leaves, twigs and litter are removed and turf grass is grown. As a result, there's no natural nutrient source and to make matters worse, the turf grass is competing for what little nutrients there are.

Fertilizing the turf is not enough for the tree and neither is atmospheric nitrogen. If, however, your trees are in a large, good quality organic mulch bed then you are more closely mimicking what occurs in the forest floor. Trees in the landscape that are not fertilized are in a state of low vigor. Trees in a state of low vigor are sus-

ceptible to disease and subsequent structural damage and, in extremes, death. Therefore, it is important that the cultural practice of applying sensible amounts of tree fertilizer should be implemented on a regular basis.

Do not over fertilize. This is not a case of "more is better". Fertilizers being applied with the proper recommendations are designed to improve vigor and color. They are not designed to push growth, but to enable growth and, in more mature trees, to improve longevity. Fertilizing should be done either in the spring before the hot temperatures of late spring and early summer arrive, fertilizing in the fall should not be done while the temperatures are still very warm, and with fertilizing in the fall it can be done up until the ground freezes.

## Planting a Tree

*It's better to put a \$100 tree in a \$200 hole than to put a \$200 tree in a \$100 hole!*

1. Planting trees at the correct depth is critical for positioning roots in top layers of soil where there is enough air for them to prosper. Dig planting holes wide rather than deep so roots will not be crowded. Dig a shallow, broad planting hole. Make the hole wide, as much as three times the diameter of the root ball, but only as deep as the root ball. It is important to make the hole wide because the tree roots on the newly establishing tree must push through surrounding soil in order to establish. On most planting sites in new developments, the existing soils have been compacted and are unsuitable for healthy root growth. Breaking up the soil in a large area around the tree provides the newly emerging roots room to expand into loose soil to hasten establishment.

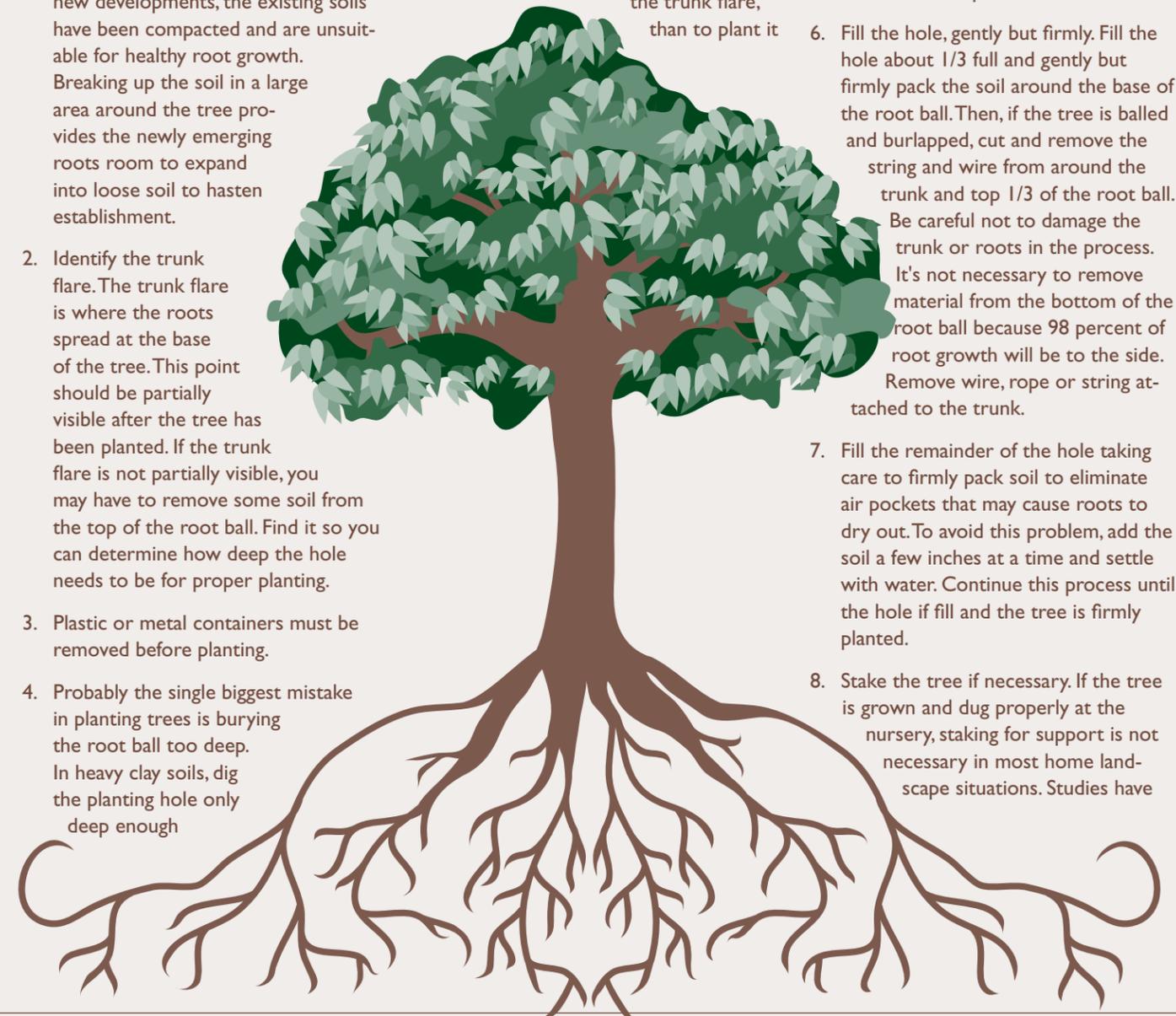
2. Identify the trunk flare. The trunk flare is where the roots spread at the base of the tree. This point should be partially visible after the tree has been planted. If the trunk flare is not partially visible, you may have to remove some soil from the top of the root ball. Find it so you can determine how deep the hole needs to be for proper planting.
3. Plastic or metal containers must be removed before planting.
4. Probably the single biggest mistake in planting trees is burying the root ball too deep. In heavy clay soils, dig the planting hole only deep enough

so the top 2 to 3 inches of the root ball remains above ground level. In sandy soil, the root ball's top can be even with ground level. Place the tree at the proper height. Before placing the tree in the hole, check to see that the hole has been dug to the proper depth and no more. The majority of the roots on the newly planted tree will develop in the top 12 inches of soil. If the tree is planted too deep, new roots will have difficulty developing due to a lack of oxygen. It is better to plant the tree a little high, 2-3 inches above the base of the trunk flare,

than to plant it

at or below the original growing level. This will allow for some settling. To avoid damage when setting the tree in the hole, always lift the tree by the root ball and never by the trunk.

5. Place the root ball on firm soil in the bottom of the planting hole, not on loose backfill. Backfill will settle and the tree will sink. Straighten the tree in the hole. Before you begin backfilling have someone view the tree from several directions to confirm the tree is straight. Once you begin backfilling it is difficult to reposition.
6. Fill the hole, gently but firmly. Fill the hole about 1/3 full and gently but firmly pack the soil around the base of the root ball. Then, if the tree is balled and burlapped, cut and remove the string and wire from around the trunk and top 1/3 of the root ball. Be careful not to damage the trunk or roots in the process. It's not necessary to remove material from the bottom of the root ball because 98 percent of root growth will be to the side. Remove wire, rope or string attached to the trunk.
7. Fill the remainder of the hole taking care to firmly pack soil to eliminate air pockets that may cause roots to dry out. To avoid this problem, add the soil a few inches at a time and settle with water. Continue this process until the hole is full and the tree is firmly planted.
8. Stake the tree if necessary. If the tree is grown and dug properly at the nursery, staking for support is not necessary in most home landscape situations. Studies have



shown that trees will establish more quickly and develop stronger trunk and root systems if they are not staked at the time of planting.

- Mulch the base of the tree. Mulch is simply organic matter applied to the area at the base of the tree. It acts as a blanket to hold moisture, moderate soil temperature extremes, both hot and cold, and reduces competition from grass and weeds. A two to four inch layer is ideal. More than 4 inches may cause a problem with oxygen and moisture levels. When placing mulch, care should be taken so that the actual trunk of the tree is not covered. This may cause decay of the living bark at the base of the tree. A mulch-free area, one to two inches wide at the base of the tree is sufficient to avoid moist bark conditions and prevent decay. When applying mulch, don't think volcano, think donut, with a hole in the middle, and not thicker than 4 inches.

- Follow-up care. Keep the soil moist but not soaked; over watering will cause leaves to turn yellow or fall off. Water trees at least once a week, barring rain, and more frequently during hot weather. When the soil is dry below the surface of the mulch, it is time to water. Continue until mid-fall, tapering off for lower temperatures that require less frequent watering.

Other follow-up care may include minor pruning of branches damaged during the planting process. Prune sparingly immediately after planting and wait to begin necessary corrective pruning until after a full season of growth in the new location.

A newly planted tree needs only minimal pruning. Prune out only dead, diseased or injured branches. Research shows that transplanted trees establish quicker when as much foliage as possible remains. If you do prune, don't use pruning paints on cuts.

After you've completed these simple steps, further routine care and favorable weather conditions will ensure that your new tree or shrub will grow and thrive. As a valuable asset to any landscape, trees provide a long-lasting source of beauty and enjoyment for people of all ages. When questions arise about the care of your trees make sure to contact us and

ask to speak with one of the certified arborist on staff. The success of newly planted trees is dependent on proper tree planting and proper follow-up care that promotes a vigorous root system. Following a few simple steps, home gardeners can create an environment that will ensure a healthy, long lived tree.

### BARE ROOT TREE PLANTING

Unpack tree and soak in water 3 to 6 hours. Do not plant with packing material attached to roots and do not allow roots to dry out. Dig a hole, wider than seems necessary, so the roots can spread without crowding. Remove any grass within a 3 foot circular area. To aid root growth, turn soil in an area up to 3 feet in diameter. Plant the tree at the same depth it stood in the nursery, or at the root flare, without crowding the roots. Partially fill the hole, firming the soil around the lower roots. Do not add soil amendments such as peat or moss. Shovel in the remaining soil. It should be firmly but not tightly packed. Construct a water-holding basin around the tree. Give the tree plenty of water.

After the water has soaked in, place 2 inch deep protective mulch in an area 3 feet in diameter around the base of the tree (but not touching the trunk). During dry weather, water the tree generously every week or 10 days during the first year.

### IMMEDIATE TREE CARE:

It is best to plant your trees immediately. If you can't because of weather or soil conditions, store in a cool place with damp moisture-holding material covering the roots. Do not freeze.

### WATERING

Proper watering is the single most important aspect of tree maintenance. Newly planted trees have a reduced root system in a small soil volume that will dry out quickly. Specific advice for watering is difficult to give because of the variability of planting sites and soil types, but a general rule of thumb is to keep the top 8 to 12 inches of the soil root ball evenly moist. In most environments, the equivalent of about one inch of rainfall every 7 to 10 days is sufficient. Watering beyond this will do more harm than good. Periodically check soil by gently digging a few inches deep, or use a dowel rod and check for moist soil 6 to 8 inches deep. Water only when the soil appears dry. Over-water-

ing is a common mistake made by home gardeners who may "love" their tree to death.

### MULCH

Most trees originated in forests with rich surface layers consisting of decomposed leaves and other organic matter. The use of organic mulch around the tree is a simple treatment that helps mimic this forest condition. A forest tree provides its own mulch with several inches of leaves on the ground. We can imitate this by mulching the plant area with 3-4 inches of organic mulch. Don't use plastic beneath the mulch: water or air can't penetrate it. Fabric-type weed-barriers are preferable. Mulching over time, improves soil aeration and structure that provides a nutrient source while keeping the soil moist to promote root growth. When using mulch, it is preferable to avoid fresh mulch: mulch that has been composted for 4-7 months is best. When placing mulch around trees, use moderation. As the use of mulch has gained interest many people have gone overboard by heaping mulch volcanoes around trees. Instead of a volcano, make a donut. Organic mulch should be 3-4 inches deep and care should be taken so that the mulch does not come in contact with the trunk, leaving a space of 1-2 inches away from the trunk. One thing you won't see in the forest is manicured lawns around a tree. Research shows that newly planted trees are at a disadvantage when they must compete with grass for water, air and nutrients. Keep grass from the planting area for at least one year. If you mulch around trees, instead of planting grass, you also prevent possible trunk damage by lawn mowers or string trimmers.

Fertilizing a tree at the time of planting should be avoided. Fertilizing should not be done until the plant has been in the ground for one year. Some experts believe if mulch is used, one may not need the addition of a fertilizer. The use of rock around trees should be avoided. While rock has some limited applications as a ground cover, most rock creates an alkaline environment and most trees prefer an acidic soil. Volcanic rock is particularly detrimental to trees: not only is it alkaline, but its darker color cause it to hold excessive heat.

## Yearly Calendar

### TREE CARE

#### January

- Prune American Elm trees

#### February

- Prune Oak Trees
- Injections for Prevention of Dutch Elm Disease

#### March

- Dormant Oil Spraying starts
- Fire Blight Treatment
- Spring Cambistat Treatment

#### April

- Dormant Oil Spray continues
- Sweetgum Ball Florel Spraying

#### May

- Deep Root Fertilization
- Sulfur coated, high nitrogen fertilizer applied to promote stem & leaf growth

#### June

- Bagworms on evergreens, and in the landscape

#### July

- Japanese beetles on fruit trees, some flowers, little leaf linden trees, river birches, etc

#### August

- Webworms on fruit or other trees

#### September

- Deep Root Fertilization of trees and shrubs
- Spray tulip trees for aphids/scale
- Fire Blight treatments

#### October

- Deep Root Fertilizing
- Treatments for Iron Chlorosis on Oak Trees

#### November

- Prune Oak Trees

#### December

- Prune Oak Trees

### LAWN CARE

#### March

- Pre-emergent for crabgrass & spring annual weeds
- Post-emergent for weeds, and shrub & flower beds

#### April

- Second pre-emergent to control foxtails & other summer annual weeds
- Well balanced Fertilizer for quick green-up
- Post-Emergent for weeds in shrub beds

#### June

- A balanced, slow release fertilizer to continue healthy growth
- Spot treatment for control of broadleaf and grassy weeds

#### September

- Especially formulated fertilizer to strengthen and deepen root system
- Pre-emergent to control winter weeds and grasses

## We'd Love to Hear from You!

Allen's Tree Service Inc is happy to assist you with any services you may need more information about. Please cut this out, mark the items you are interested in and either call, e-mail, or mail this to the address below ...we look forward to hearing from you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Complete Tree Health Care

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tree/limb removal    | <input type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis/Evaluations     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood/Brush Removal   | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep Root Fertilization   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stump Grinding       | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect/Disease Control    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bucket Truck Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Oil Spray   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Pruning    | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuisance Fruit Eliminator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deadwooding          | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Regulators         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crown Thinning       | <input type="checkbox"/> Injections                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crown Raising        | <input type="checkbox"/> Vertical Mulching         |

### Complete Landscape Maintenance

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grass Cutting | <input type="checkbox"/> Weed/Crab Grass Control      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edging        | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect Control               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trimming      | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf Removal                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fertilization | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Bed Maintenance    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aeration      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mulching of Landscaped Areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overseeding   |   |

### 24-Hour Emergency Storm Service

#### Land / Lot Clearing

#### Organic and Colored Mulches (sold in bulk or by the yard)

#### Commercial Snow & Ice Removal

Allen's Tree Service  
2755 W. Pearce Blvd.  
Wentzville, MO 63385-3218

(636) 332-5535

[www.allenstreeservice.com](http://www.allenstreeservice.com)

#### Additional Questions/Information:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Have Your Trees Suffered from RECENT STORM DAMAGE?

Recent storms have caused tremendous stress and severe damage to our trees. Obviously, a broken or fallen tree should be removed. What about a tree that suffers minor damage, how can a homeowner tell if a tree is safe?

Minor damage is when small branches of the tree are injured that results in little or no permanent injury to the tree. Proper cutting of the broken branches and possibly crown thinning may need to be done to restore the tree to a non-hazardous situation.

Severe damage is when large broken branches, split forks, removal of bark, and splitting or splintering of the trunk may be caused from ice or snow. When a tree is severely damaged and is hazardous a certified arborist or a tree care professional

should be consulted. Most certified arborists will take the time and effort to save a tree only if the tree will remain healthy, attractive, and of value to the property owner after repairs.

Be leery of solicitors after these storms. People with trucks and chainsaws may show up and start soliciting homes in neighborhoods with a lot of damaged trees. You should only allow reputable tree care companies with proper insurance to give an assessment or to do the work on the trees in your property. This is important because you could be held liable if any of the hazardous branches fall or if the tree falls and damages property or causes personal injury. If solicitors are canvassing your neighborhood call and report them to local authorities.

Our company has been serving both residential and commercial clients in St. Charles and St. Louis County for more than 27 years!

We are members of the St. Louis Arborist Association, the Tree Care Industry Association, the International Society of Arboriculture, the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce, and the Lake St. Louis Chamber of Commerce.



2755 W. Pearce Blvd.  
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*"Branching Out" is published periodically to bring you information that will make your life easier and more enjoyable. We would appreciate it if you would pass this newsletter along to friends and relatives who might be in need of any of our services.*

*If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or would like to request an additional issue of "Branching Out" please call Allen's Tree Service Inc. at 636-946-2213 or 636-332-5535 or visit us online:*

[www.allenstreeservice.com](http://www.allenstreeservice.com)

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