



UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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For Immediate Release

Homeowners Urged To Use Caution When Clearing Storm-Damaged Trees

(Concord, NH) Once again Mother Nature will be sending New Hampshire some challenging weather – this time in the form of a hurricane. It is expected that the strong winds and heavy rains associated with Hurricane Irene will cause trees to fall; blocking roads and damaging buildings and power lines. In the days following the storm residents may be anxious to clear fallen trees and limbs from around their property. However; the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands and UNH Cooperative Extension urge homeowners to use the following appropriate precautions when clearing storm-damaged trees.

The best advice is a word of caution: Removing large trees or limbs is dangerous. Don't climb a ladder with a chain saw. Don't climb into a damaged tree. Never touch any tree near electrical wires. Assess your particular tree situation carefully and watch for safety hazards. Most tree work needs to be done by professional arborists, especially when the work requires climbing or the tree is leaning against another tree or structure. If you're going to work on your trees yourself, make sure you have the skills and the right safety gear.

Hire an arborist: Trained arborists are aware of proper pruning and removal procedures and can reduce the chance of further damage to the tree. Check to see that they are certified and ask for certificates of insurance, including proof of liability for personal and property damage and worker's compensation. Also, request local references and get more than one estimate.

Hire a forester: If you own large acreage, contact your County Extension Forester or a licensed forester to assess the damage, and then salvage the trees if needed. Over time, damaged trees may develop decay and discoloration. As long as it is safe, there is no need to rush. You have more than a year to act before you lose wood to discoloration and decay.

Brad Simpkins, Interim Director of the NH Division of Forests and Lands reminds homeowners to be safe, "The trees and forests will recover. It is important people take care of themselves, first".

If you have questions about your trees contact your County Extension Forester. For more information on assessing and cleaning up storm-damaged trees visit www.nhwoods.org or call 1-800-444-8978 to learn how to contact your forester and for safety, contract and pruning information.

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