

## Safety is Critical: 4 Easy Requirements when Hiring Tree Work

Trees need maintenance and care like other portions of your property. When you are looking to hire someone to work on your trees, it is critical that you choose a tree contractor that has the appropriate certifications, qualifications, equipment, experience, and adequate workers' compensation and business insurance to protect you and your property. The Ohio Chapter International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) recommends that tree owners carefully select and choose professional arborists who perform their work by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and have the appropriate insurance. The Ohio Chapter ISA suggests individuals that may hire tree care services to follow these 4 easy steps:



**#1 Tree Inspection** – Hazardous trees or trees showing abnormalities in appearance should be inspected by an ISA Certified Arborist. ISA Certified Arborists are recognized worldwide to have a superior knowledge and understanding of trees and the practices that your tree will benefit from.

**#2 Tree Care Recommendations** – The inspecting Certified Arborist should provide recommendations and work specified in the written form. Those specifications for actions taken to your trees should meet the ANSI A300 arboricultural standards for the United States. Additionally, the tree care recommendations are provided for the consideration of what equipment and personnel will be required to perform the work in a safe manner. An example quote might read, *all work performed to meet ANSI Z133 safety standards. Target tree is in the right rear of the property. 42" DBH Silver Maple (Acer saccharinum). Remove deadwood of 1.0" or larger throughout canopy and reduce the (1) 8.0" branch on the south side of the tree to the branch collar at the tree trunk utilizing 1-2-3 cut with branch supported by a rigging line with a tagline to control the branch.*

**#3 Safety First** – The work performed by the arborist meets and exceeds the Z133 Standards (Safety Standards for Arboriculture). The contract with the arborist performing the work should specify that performance will be in accordance with the Z133 safety standards of arboriculture. Compliance with Z133 will reduce the likelihood of injuries on your property. For example, Arborists that follow the Z133 standards wear hard hats, safety vests, and have safety protocols for inspection of the tree and the equipment they use before working. They should set up a work zone that is at least two times the height of the tree being worked on to protect the public from entering this area.

**#4 Insurance Matters** – Tree work is one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States, and many injuries are avoidable if proper safety precautions are taken. Additionally, for your protection, you should require the tree contractor of your choice to provide the following:

- Proof of insurance that provides that you the client is named on the insurance declaration.
- Require the contract arborist provide a copy of a paid workers' compensation certificate.

Arborists are Professionals – Tree owners that select and choose Certified Arborist to inspect and to work on their trees, may follow appropriate tree care and safety standards and have the appropriate insurances. These individuals will likely provide high-quality work and the result will only enhance the life of your trees and add value to the property.

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*The Ohio Chapter International Society of Arboriculture's mission is to advance the practice of responsible tree care while promoting the benefits of trees.*

*There are over 1,000 qualified tree experts in the state of Ohio who have passed rigorous training and testing by the International Society of Arboriculture to become ISA Certified Arborists. These tree care professionals have the knowledge, experience, and are ready to ensure your trees are in a safe, healthy, and functional condition. To find one in your area, visit [www.trees4ohio.org](http://www.trees4ohio.org).*