

# Tree Pruning

## Late Winter and Very Early Spring are Good Times to Prune Trees

Proper tree maintenance is very important for the health and safety of trees and pruning is an important part of this maintenance. Proper pruning keeps a large-growing species in scale, removes diseased, dead or broken branches, and encourages a tree to grow strong, healthy branches that can better withstand damage during severe weather.

While we often have snow and not our landscapes in mind this time of year, in general, late winter or very early spring before buds swell is a good time to prune many trees (though dead or diseased branches can be pruned anytime) and here's why:

\*Pruning trees while they are dormant--when their energy is being stored in their roots-- causes less stress to the tree. The cuts from pruning generally heal faster during the dormant season.

\*During winter months disease-causing insects and diseases are less prevalent. Fresh cuts on trees make it easier for such insects and diseases to invade trees. Certain trees, like oaks, should never be pruned during the spring or summer because they are more susceptible during these seasons to severe damage caused by insects.

\*Frozen ground helps protect the surrounding landscape--like grass and dormant perennials-- from harm caused by heavy equipment and cut branches.

\*Lack of foliage allows an arborist to clearly see the tree's structure.

\*There may be cost savings because it's easier for arborists to position their equipment, see the tree's structure, and remove leafless limbs, thereby resulting in less time on the job.

\*Pruning evergreens during the dormant season may reduce sap and resin flow from cut branches. Done the right way at the right time, large evergreens can oftentimes be trimmed so that a desired height is maintained.

It is important that pruning be done by an arborist with the right knowledge and experience. An ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) certified arborist must have experience and have passed an exam in order to receive certification. To find an ISA certified arborist visit [Treesaregood.org](http://Treesaregood.org).

Proper tree pruning will help maintain a healthy tree canopy for our community.