

Tree Services Feature: Spring Tree Care Checklist



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The spring season puts the lawn care business in full swing. As you gear up for this new season, remember that customers will also need a check up on their trees. If this service is in your wheelhouse, here are tips to keep in mind.



(Photo: Getty Images)

A Four-Item Checklist For Tree Care

On its website, the [Arbor Day Foundation](http://ArborDayFoundation.org) shares advice on evaluating the condition of trees after the cold weather season. The information is provided courtesy of Bayer Advanced, a business group of Bayer Crop Science: "Spring is a great time to check mature trees. Leaf canopies have not completely filled in, and you can see the structure of the tree more clearly. Damage from winter storms will be more apparent. By inspecting trees and addressing potential problems, you can safeguard the investment that healthy trees add to a property."

The information features a checklist of four areas to check on trees in order to identify possible hazards in tree growth and development.

Check Branches. Look for broken or dangling branches or cracks where branches attach to the trunk. Branches that are missing bark or growing fungus can be signs of decaying wood and potential structural problems. Narrow angles at the point where branches attach to the trunk can be weak and prone to breaking; this is especially common with elm and maple trees.

Check Leaves. As spring progresses, the tree should leaf out evenly with healthy looking foliage. Uneven coloring or slow growth in portions of the tree may be signs of problems. Most mature trees need little fertilizer, but specific nutrient deficiencies indicated by poor or uneven foliage color may need to be corrected. You should also check leaves for signs of insect damage.

Check Roots. Fungus or mushroom growth on large anchoring roots, along the base of the trunk, or on soil near the tree can indicate decay. Cavities or hollows near the base of the tree or in large roots can also be a sign of trouble. Cracked or raised soil on one side of a tree trunk could indicate the start of leaning and weakness. New construction and soil compaction can also damage roots.

Check Trunks. Look for cracks or cavities, oozing wounds, or sunken or missing bark. Mushrooms or fungal growth can also be a sign of decay and structural weakness.

Any of these symptoms can diminish a tree's stability. The exterior of a tree may appear fine except for a small crack, cavity, or fungus while the interior may be rotted, soft, or even empty.

If any of these conditions are noted, the information on the Arbor Day Foundation website notes the skills of an arborist may be needed.

Meanwhile, this past fall, Arbor Day Foundation launched a new Tree Campus Healthcare program. This program aims to transform community health and wellness through the health benefits provided by trees, as well as recognize health institutions that make a mission-aligned impact to improve community wellness through tree planting and education, as well as community engagement.

The Tree Campus Healthcare recognition program connects inpatient healthcare facilities of all sizes with local community forestry programs to improve human health outcomes, while improving the extent and condition of community forests. Facilities in the U.S. delivering inpatient healthcare services are eligible for Tree Campus Healthcare recognition, including hospitals, senior care, and other residential rehabilitation centers.



(Photo: Getty Images)

Five Ways To Care For Trees In Spring

[Davey Tree](#) features a plethora of advice on tree care, and seasonal insight is part of the company's expertise. On its website, the company offers this spring checklist ([with related links here](#)).

Inspect trees and shrubs. When melting snow and rainfall occur simultaneously, your landscape may encounter standing water and/or flood damage. Pay close attention to critical risk trees and consult a professionally-trained arborist to determine whether removal and/or pest and disease treatments are necessary. (For more about drainage issues on client properties, see the article on page 24.)

Prune dead branches. Want healthy trees? Proper pruning protects your green assets from the unsafe branches that suffered damage from winter weather. An arborist may recommend cabling and bracing, to reduce strain and stress damage from high winds, or lightning protection for future spring and summer storms.

Plant new trees. Davey Tree Service shares several resources you need for proper planting, following the "right tree, right place" principle (for more, [see this link](#)).

Mulch your landscape. Mulch secures the organic matter trees need beneath the soil surface. Conserve soil moisture and control weeds with proper mulching techniques.

Fertilize plants. Before your trees and shrubs enter peak growing season, apply a slow-release fertilizer to not only replace nutrients, but also to improve plants' resistance to damage from diseases, insects and stressful weather.

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