



Borough of Glen Rock Tree Tips

Tree maintenance and recognizing potential tree hazards

Sustaining Glen Rock's tree canopy has many environmental benefits and maintains the aesthetic character of our town. The best way to preserve the health of our trees is to plan a cycle of maintenance and replacement. Recognizing potential tree hazardous and taking proper corrective actions can protect property and add years to the life of your trees.

Inspect trees annually

- *Look up!* Is your tree leafing out? Does it look like other trees in your neighborhood? If not, the reason may be as simple as looking down. Tree health starts with the roots. Is your tree in a heavily trafficked area? Check for impacted soil, bare roots, trunk bulge and damage from lawnmowers. If these conditions exist: mulch, loosen soil around the trunk and make sure your tree is getting enough water.
- *Remove dead wood and crossed branches. Check leaves and branches for bugs or diseases.* However if poor growth patterns persist or you observe any of the conditions listed below, professional tree services may be warranted.

What is a tree hazard and what to look for:

- *Cracks.* A crack is a deep split through the bark, extending into the wood of the tree. Cracks can be dangerous because they can indicate that the tree is already failing.
- *Weak Branch Unions.* These are places where branches are not strongly attached to the tree. A weak union occurs when two or more similarly sized, usually upright branches, grow so closely together that bark grows between the branches, inside the union.
- *Decay.* Decaying trees can be prone to failure, but the presence of decay by itself or the presence of lichens, does not indicate that the tree is hazardous. Wood that is soft, or crumbly; a deep cavity; and fungal activity including mushrooms, conks, and brackets growing on root flares, stems, or branches are indicators of advanced decay.
- *Cankers.* A canker is an area on the stem or branch, where the bark is sunken or missing and is caused by wounding or disease.
- *Root Problems.* Trees with root problems can be destabilized in windstorms or fall without warning when burdened with the weight of the tree's leaves. There are many kinds of root problems to consider like severing or paving-over roots; raising or lowering the soil grade near the tree; parking or driving vehicles over the roots; or extensive root decay. Soil mounding, twig dieback, dead wood in the crown, and off-color or smaller than normal leaves are symptoms often associated with root problems.
- *Poor Tree Architecture.* This is a growth pattern that can indicate weakness or structural imbalance. Trees with strange shapes may be structurally defective. It often arises after many years of damage from storms or poor pruning.

Leslie Kameny Chair
Paul Rosengren GR Tree Trust
Naomi Gamora
Minna Greenberg
Carol Knapp
Rob Dill
Greg Tondi
Robert Tirserio DPW
Carmine Nogara GR Council



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Multiple Defects

- The recognition of multiple defects in a tree is critical when evaluating the tree's potential to fail and should be carefully examined. If more than one defect occurs on the tree's main stem, you should assume that the tree is hazardous.
- Consider both the tree species; (certain variety of trees are prone to specific types of defects) and the age and size of your tree. Older trees may have had more stress or are reaching the end of their lives.

Corrective Actions

Corrective actions begin with a thorough evaluation. If a hazardous situation exists, there are three recommended options for correcting the problem:

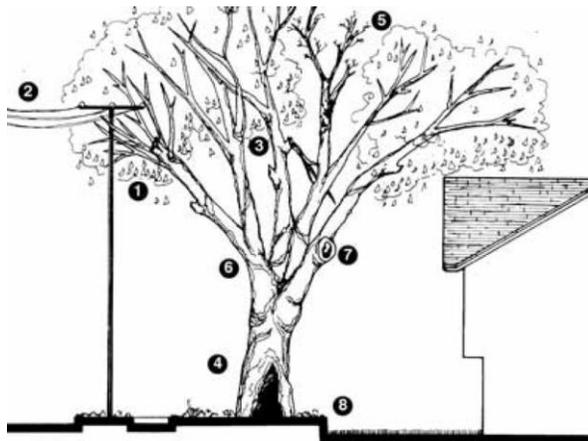
- Move anything near the tree that can be damaged
- Hire a certified arborist to prune the tree
- Have the tree removed by a certified arborist

Before cutting a tree down, carefully consider the alternatives. The effects of removing a tree are often pronounced in landscape situations and may result in reduced property values.

Tree removal should be considered as the final option and used only when the other two corrective actions will not work.

Possible Tree Defects

1. Broken or partially attached branch
2. Electrical line adjacent to tree
3. Dead or dying branches
4. Decay and rot present in old wounds
5. Regrowth from topping, line clearance, or other pruning
6. Branches arising from a single point on the trunk
7. Open cavity in trunk or branch
8. Recent change in grade or soil level, or other construction



The Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for planting trees on borough property. To request a free street tree or for more information, call (201) 670-3980.