

Sooner or later, tree problems crop up on everyone's property. Here are some things to think about when these problems visit your home.

Most property owners (homeowners, businesses, municipalities, parks) run across problems with the trees growing on their land. These could be issues with tree health related to age, pests or site characteristics such as waterlogged soils. It could also be related to branches or roots encroaching near structures such as homes, sidewalks, or driveways. Treatments may be needed to prune broken or encroaching branches, apply pesticides, or correct drainage issues. Too often, when the property owner calls for help, they often use the 'low bid' approach to deal with these issues. Unfortunately, this can result in incorrect diagnoses and treatments or even the removal of trees when not warranted.

Arborists are tree care professionals that are knowledgeable and highly skilled in identifying issues and providing high quality tree care. They have received scientifically based training to detect structural and pest issues, and then understand and subscribe to the best management practices that have been researched and determined by the industry. A reputable professional arborist will have taken the initiative to become a Certified Arborist through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). The highest level is a Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) qualified Arborist. ISA provides more information on why to hire an arborist and how to find a certified arborist on their website <https://www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/whyhireanarborist>.

Not all tree care companies have certified, TRAQ professional arborists on staff. It's important that you ask for credentials and proof of insurance to make certain that you are getting the best advice and are protected from accidents.

The City of Avon Lake is stepping up tree care on public lands by approving the hiring of an Urban Forester. This is exciting news for our city! Avon Lake's Urban Forester will have a college degree in forestry or related major and be a TRAQ qualified certified arborist who is also trained in the management of urban tree populations. This is critically important to make sure we have the best management of our existing trees, plenty of species diversity in our urban forest, and that we are planting species that can tolerate current and future conditions. Our Urban Forester will plan inventories and use the data to develop tree planting, removal, and maintenance programs to ensure healthy trees in Avon Lake's parks, along our streets, and on other municipal property. This is an important step to ensure that all the benefits that we get from our trees are sustainable over the long haul. We thank our Mayor and City Council for their vision.