

# **Branching Out – Tree Care Tips**

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## Winter is the time to prune!

You may think that because it's winter and the trees are dormant, you don't have to take care of them. Like any living thing, trees need care year round. Winter is the best time to do tree pruning.

### **Why prune in winter:**

- With the leaves off, cracks, defects and deadwood are easier to see
- Hazards can be removed before storms cause them to fall and do property damage
- Diseases and insects are not active in winter. (Due to disease problems trees such as Elm and Oak can *only* be trimmed when dormant)
- Dead branches are easier to see and to remove
- With leaves off, the view of the entire trees architecture is clear and easy to see

The biggest question we receive in relationship to dormant pruning is, how are we able to determine deadwood on a tree when the leaves are off? Deadwood is usually darker in color, very brittle, often has fungal growth, and often times has surface and subsurface cracking.

Pruning is much more than the simple act of sawing off limbs. Proper pruning is an art based on scientific principles of plant physiology. At it's most basic level pruning trees involves removing damaged, dead and structurally weak limbs, which will improve a tree's health and reduce the chances of personal or property damage caused by falling limbs.

Professional arborists have the capability of making the tree safer and more attractive by pruning live growth as well. Proper pruning encourages growth, increases flower and fruit production, improves plant health, repairs damage and helps add aesthetic appeal to a tree. Pruning at the right time and in the right way is critical, since it is possible to shorten the life of a tree or even kill a tree through neglect or over-pruning.

If you have additional questions or would like information on tree care, please contact a professional, certified arborist. Gluck Tree Care, Inc. of Random Lake employs certified arborists and has over 20 years of arboriculture experience. Certified arborists must follow stringent safety and performance standards, are required to have insurance, and have a trained and professional staff, that is dedicated to ethics and quality in business practices.