

# Green Works

**Newsletter of Tree Preservation, Forestry and Land Enhancement** 

Spring is in the air in northern New England! And mud is covering the roads.... But as the snow starts to recede, we can begin to see all the projects Mother Nature has created for us over the winter (see our *Spring Checklist*). I, for one, can't wait to get out into the yard to begin the seasonal clean up, and my wife Mundy can't wait to get her hands into garden projects.

This edition's featured article by our consulting arborist Cal Felicetti addresses an often overlooked aspect of undertaking a home construction or remodeling project: how to protect your valuable landscape trees from damage or even death. After chasing contractors out from under the canopy of our own trees last summer, we know it can be a frustrating experience! But thanks to the great care and persistence of our arborists, our landscape trees are thriving with little harmful impact.

Have a happy spring and visit us in early May at www.chippersinc.com! Our new website will be filled with valuable information on every aspect of tree care in northern New England. *–Will Russell* 

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## Trees and Construction

Cal Felicetti, ASCA Member Consulting Arborist, ISA Certified Arborist

B uilding or remodeling near mature trees is not as easy as it seems. Just because we can't see what goes on below the surface (grade) doesn't mean it's not important. The life of a tree below grade is as important as the life of the tree we enjoy—above grade.

Who doesn't enjoy the shade of a large tree on a hot sunny day or the beauty of a flowering tree at its peak? It is easy to list the benefits of trees and hard to convince people of the need to respect a tree's root zone. Communicating clearly with contractors will preserve healthy mature trees from irreversible and unnecessary damage. Please take a

"He who plants a tree plants a hope." -LUCY LARCOM, 19TH-CENTURY WRITER few moments to read some simple steps you can take to protect your trees during construction.

#### NUMBER ONE: PLANNING

Whether you are doing construction work near trees yourself or you have a contractor, it is very important to have a plan that includes the trees you value. Any soil disturbance, grade change or

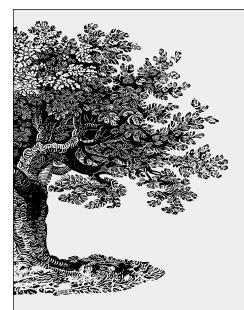
compaction within the root zone is damaging to the tree. The amount of roots you preserve during construction will have a corresponding affect on the tree and its health.

A good place to start is by preserving the roots from the stem or trunk of the tree out to the drip line (the outside edge of the canopy). Consider the area under the canopy of any trees to be sacred! Plan early so that your contractor can account for the extra care required when the job begins. It is not uncommon to have to pump concrete because of trees or tunneling for utilities instead of trenching through the root zone. These accomodations cost more money—how important are your trees to you?

Construction contract limitations with regard to trees may be necessary. Fines and penalties can be tied to the specifications and should be proportional to the potential tree damage.

If you have the luxury of planning a year or more in advance, you can root prune the tree and chemically enhance the root system closer to the trunk. This can give you more room for construction and increase the survivability of the tree. A consulting arborist is qualified to create a tree preservation plan for your property.

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#### The Enkindled Spring

THIS spring as it comes bursts up in bonfires green,

Wild puffing of emerald trees, and flame-filled bushes,

Thorn-blossom lifting in wreaths of smoke between

Where the wood fumes up and the watery, flickering rushes.

I am amazed at this spring, this conflagration

Of green fires lit on the soil of the earth, this blaze

Of growing, and sparks that puff in wild gyration,

Faces of people streaming across my gaze.

And I, what fountain of fire am I among

This leaping combustion of spring? My spirit is tossed

About like a shadow buffeted in the throng

Of flames, a shadow that's gone astray, and is lost.

–D.H. Lawrence

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#### NUMBER TWO: FENCING

Did I say fence? YES! Fence trees to include at least the area within the drip line or allow one foot of space from the trunk for each inch of trunk diameter. Erect a sturdy fence that is not easily removed. Monitor fences to be sure they haven't been moved to make room for a storage area, a path for trucks or a place to rinse off equipment.

Designate with your contractor specific site access and parking for all vehicles. Try to use one route onto the construction site and specify areas for storage of equipment and materials.

As the end of the job approaches do not become complacent. Shade-seeking carpenters and trades people will try to park their pickups and vans under your prize trees—don't let them!

#### NUMBER THREE: OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Keep trees watered during hot dry weather and add a thin layer of mulch to hold moisture and to moderate soil temperature.

If you have no choice but to allow workers in the root zone area of trees, provide as much protection as possible. Trucks and equipment compact soil and push air out of the upper layers. Minimize compaction by laying plywood down for vehicles to drive over. Replace barrier fences after the plywood is no longer needed.

If there is a landscape phase of the project the same rules apply. Planting grass up to the stem of trees is never a good idea. Irrigation lines installed within the root zone and grade changes, even as little as two inches, can have a negative effect on the health of your mature trees.

#### NUMBER FOUR: AFTER CONSTRUCTION

After all the finish crews are completely done, remove construction fences and re-mulch trees. Stressed trees are more prone to insect and disease infestation and will require more frequent evaluation. A soil injected root promoter and mycorrhizal fungi inoculant should speed recovery and begin to loosen compacted soils.

Consider hiring one of our certified tree experts for a post-construction evaluation: consulting@chippersinc.com.



Welcome to the World Aiden Allen Kingsbury! The 6lb.15oz. baby boy was born on January 29th to Stacey and Josh.

Do we have a future chipper in our midst?

**Save a tree:** Help us cut down on paper usage and sign up for our new electronic invoice service. If you would prefer this method of billing please email Pamela Rose, our Accounts Receiveable Administrator, at: admin@chippersinc.com.

#### Notes from the Arborist: Customer Forum

#### Q: Does planting depth really matter?

Yes. Proper planting depth is finally getting some publicity. Trees (all woody plants) need to be planted at the first order root. This is the first significant root coming from the main stem - commonly found at the trunk flare. Trees planted too deeply will struggle, become diseased and die prematurely.

#### Q: Are trees roots as deep as they are tall?

No. Very few trees have a tap root, especially in our area with shallow, rocky soils. Large buttress roots will go down a few feet or more with most of the feeder roots extending well beyond the dripline and very near the ground's surface. Take a look at a blown down/uprooted tree and you'll see the root system looks like a pancake!

### Q: My excavating contractor wants to "grub out" the roots around a mature tree and plant grass. Will this hurt the tree?

Yes. This is very bad and a sure way to kill a mature tree. Keep as much of the original litter/duff layer around the tree and add bark mulch or woodchips as necessary. Cut any undesired vegetation low to the grade and use herbicides if necessary. Consider using a ground cover such as Myrtle instead of grass.

#### Please email your tree related questions to: askthearborist@chippersinc.com.



#### MEET A CHIPPER



**Mark Liebert** is one of our managers and our lead Plant Health Care Specialist.

Born in the Netherlands, he moved to New Jersey in his early years, and then to the Midwest where he attended high school. Mark graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1998 with a BS in Forestry with an emphasis on urban forestry.

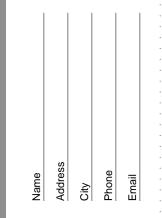
He moved to New England after graduation and soon thereafter began working as a climber in our Woodstock office, becoming a certified Arborist and being promoted to Operations Manager of our Lebanon office in 2003.

Mark and his wife Renee live in Enfield with their "girls," canines Maggie and Molly. In his spare time he enjoys fishing, home improvement projects, hiking with Renee and the dogs and, of course, watching the New England Patriots.

#### **Ready for Spring?**

Come visit our booth at the HomeLife Show at the Leverone Fieldhouse in Hanover on March 25-27 and enter our Drawing to win \$1,000 worth of tree work at your property!

Show Hours: Friday 5-9pm, Sat 10am-9pm, Sun 12-5pm



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1st Prize \$1,000 Worth of Tree Work at Your Property2nd Prize 100 Gallons of Our New England BlendTree Fertilizer

**3rd Prize** Two-Hour Arborist Consultation at Your Property

Cut out this drawing coupon and bring it with you to the HomeLife Show on March 26-28 (winners to be notified by phone at a later date).



"Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it: the tree is the real thing. - ABRAHAM LINCOLN



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