

# STOP TREE TOPPING!



*Tree topping, the indiscriminate cutting back of tree branches to stubs, hurts both trees and the environment!*

**Topping starves and shocks trees** by removing much of the tree's protective "crown" of leaves and branches. Without its "crown," a tree cannot produce the food necessary for growth, nor protect its sensitive bark from damaging sun and heat. The result is often cankering, bark splitting and the death of branches.

**Topping leaves trees vulnerable to insects and disease** that can enter the bark through the large branch-end cuts. Once a tree's physiological system is altered, disease resistance is greatly lowered.

**Topping weakens trees** because the new branches that sprout from a severed limb are significantly weaker than the original limb. Weakened branches are much more likely to fall in a storm or in other adverse weather.

**Topping is expensive** with many hidden costs, such as increased liability and reduced property value. Topped trees are expensive to maintain and may not survive in the long run.

**Topping leaves trees ugly!** A tree's natural form is the source of its beauty. Topped trees appear disfigured and mutilated. Once topped, a tree will never return to its natural shape.

**Topping will shorten the life span of all trees!**

*Tips on how to:*

**AVOID  
TOPPING**

1. Plant trees that are a good fit for the area. Plan ahead and keep in mind the size the tree will reach at maturity.
2. Prune trees properly every three years for health and longevity.
3. Avoid excessive fertilization that can force a tree's growth.
4. If you have any questions or concerns about the harmful effects of tree topping, please contact your community forester, or your local ISA-certified arborist through the International Society of Arboriculture web site [www.isa-arbor.com/arborists/arbsearch.html](http://www.isa-arbor.com/arborists/arbsearch.html)

