

March 1, 2018



City of Seattle Monthly Tree Newsletter and Upcoming Events

Winter Tree Pruning

Winter is a great time to prune your trees to maintain their vigor. This is ideal for trees that are weak, in decline, or do not grow many epicormic shoots. Epicormic shoots are those fast, straight, upright growths that spring up above the trunk (called water sprouts) or at the base of the tree (called suckers). If your tree is deciduous, you will better be able to see its structure in winter which may help with your decision making. Another benefit of winter pruning is that it helps avoid the tearing of new bark which can occur when pruning the young green wood that grows in the spring.

Useful links:

- [Events & Volunteer Opportunities](#)
- [Tree Walks](#)
- [Trees for Neighborhoods](#)
- [Green Seattle Partnership](#)
- [Urban Forestry Commission](#)
- [Street Trees](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

While most trees react well to winter pruning, there are a few types, especially if you are pruning extensively, where it is best to wait until mid-summer. Some trees that would fall into this category are magnolias and rose family plants such as apple, pear, cherry, plum, peach, and mountain ash. If any tree is already “suckering”, wait until summer.

For more tips on pruning small trees that you can safely reach, check out our [pruning page](#). If you are planning to prune a larger tree or would like specialized advice, consider hiring an expert. [ISA certified arborists](#) specialize in tree care and are knowledgeable about the needs of trees and the pruning cuts that can help the tree and avoid harm. Check out [Plant Amnesty's Arborist Referral Service](#) to help you find an arborist right for the job. Remember if you are planning to prune a 2" branch or larger on a street tree or removing more than 15% of a tree's canopy, you must first obtain a free permit from the Seattle Department of Transportation. [Learn more here.](#)



Imagine the sea of ivy these amazing volunteers would have been standing in when we first began work at this Georgetown site last year. The beautiful, mature oaks in this landscape are breathing easier with that ivy removed!

Pruning Near Power Lines

Heading out to do some winter pruning? Keep an eye out for branches growing into your power service line. Make sure branches are not too close to power lines before getting out your saw to prune them. If you are unsure, call or email Seattle City Light's arboriculturist office at sclvegetation@seattle.gov or [\(206\) 386-1733](tel:2063861733).

Seattle City Light maintains vegetation away from

your service line for the first 10 feet from the utility pole or the service bridge where it originates. For safety, Seattle City Light offers a free service to take your service line down while you, or your tree care professional, are pruning trees near your power service line location.

To schedule this service, called an "AM-PM", call one of the following telephone numbers at least two weeks before you plan on doing tree work near your service line: (1) homes south of Denny Way call [\(206\) 386-4200](tel:2063864200); (2) homes north of Denny Way call [\(206\) 615-0600](tel:2066150600). Enjoy your trees and be safe!

Did you know?

The common reasons for pruning young trees are to remove dead branches, to improve form, and to reduce future risk. In most cases, mature trees are pruned as corrective or preventive measures.

