



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

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Caution urged as lowans clean up storm damaged trees

State forestry experts are encouraging lowans to proceed with caution as they are cleaning up the tree damage from Tuesday's storms.

Emma Hanigan, urban forestry coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources suggests homeowners and volunteers wear safety equipment, including hand, foot, leg, eye, face, hearing and head protection, and avoid wearing loose-fitting clothes while using a chainsaw.

"Be careful when working with trees and limbs that are snapped off, twisted and tangled together," warns Hanigan. "The trunk or tree limbs may bind against the chainsaw."

If an oak tree is wounded from storm damage, treat the wounds immediately with a wound dressing such as acrylic paint to help prevent the spread of oak wilt. "The paint will provide a barrier from the beetles that spread oak wilt, but will still allow the wound to breathe and start to heal," explains Hanigan. Find more information about oak wilt on the DNR webpage at www.iowadnr.gov/oakwilt.

After cleanup is complete, homeowners wanting to have their trees inspected should contact a professional, insured arborist. The arborist can examine trees for cracks or other issues that might have been overlooked. Routine tree care of young trees makes them more resilient long term and decreases the likelihood of storm-related damage.

Hanigan said younger wind-thrown trees can be saved by staking and guying, but larger trees are less likely to recover.

When the time is right, homeowners who have lost trees are encouraged to replant.

The Iowa DNR has information and links to help homeowners identify and select a licensed arborist, and tips on chain saw safety, pruning and tree care and replanting online at www.iowadnr.gov/urbanforestry.

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