

## Saving Storm Damaged Trees and Shrubs

E. Thomas Smiley, PhD, Urban Forestry

Ice or snow loads can cause branch breakage or failure of entire trees and shrubs. Branches or entire trees that fall in storms can impact homes, vehicles, power lines and block roads. After a storm, the first priorities are safety and restoration of services. Next, the long-term health of trees and shrubs should be considered shortly after the storm. The following steps are recommended: assess damage, prune, fertilize, and pest management.

### Assess Damage

Have your local Bartlett arborist inspect your landscape after storms. A professional arborist can perform a tree risk assessment to assist you with making decisions on which trees might be saved and which should be removed. For the trees to be preserved, work can be prioritized to meet your budget.

### Pruning

Saving damaged plants begins with corrective pruning. Even severely damaged trees can usually be pruned to remove potentially dangerous and broken limbs without further damaging the tree.

Avoid “topping” trees or excessive pruning that will further weaken trees. Cabling and bracing can often provide structural support to damaged limbs and leaders to reduce the possibility of splitting.

### Fertilization

Many soils are deficient in one or more of the nutrients that plants need for recovery. Soil samples should be taken for nutrient analysis. Based on these results, a fertilization program can be implemented which will reduce stress and promote healthy growth.

### Pest Management

A program of scheduled inspections is recommended for early detection and treatment of pest problems. Storm-damaged plants are weakened and so are particularly susceptible to attacks by insects known as borers (Figure 1). Stressed trees and shrubs need to be treated as soon as practical after storm damage to prevent borer attacks.

**Figure 1: Winding inner bark galleries of two-lined chestnut borer (left) and frass on trunk from ambrosia beetle attack (right)**



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