



## Tree Specialists, Inc.

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Committed to landscape conservation, preservation and restoration

*Construction activity may not last long, but root compaction and mechanical injury can have long-term consequences. It is best to plan for site protection before the damage is done.*

# TREE PRESERVATION MEASURES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION SITES

## General Considerations

Before construction or land clearing begins, a professional tree care specialist, should inspect the job site. A tree survey should be developed listing the tree species, tolerance rating for construction activity, their condition, and recommendations for preservation or removal. Recommendations can be made to beautify and prepare valuable trees for the environmental change that will occur when the property is developed.

- Diseased trees, trees damaged beyond repair, and trees in danger of falling should be removed. Early removal can save dollars for the developer and create a safer building site for construction workers.
- Young, desirable trees can be relocated on site if they are in the way of construction
- Valuable trees can be more easily protected if the arborist is the first on the job site. Trimming can be accomplished to beautify and accommodate buildings.
- Soil preparation and amendments are often necessary to prepare the tree for the shock of losing part of its root system, which is often unavoidable during construction.
- Boosting plant health and if necessary, spraying for detrimental pests are best done in advance of actual land clearing.

## Tree Protection Measures

When the site is ready for clearing, trees should be protected from land clearing equipment. Barricades should be erected around the trees to protect their roots. The area of protection is best determined on a case by case basis depending on species and condition. However, the tree's drip line, an imaginary perpendicular line that extends downward from the outermost tip of the tree branches to the ground, is typically used to identify protection zones.

The area around the tree protected by the barricade is there to keep heavy equipment off the tree roots, which can compact soil, damage roots or scare the trunk. Grading away roots or adding fill (4 to 6 inches) can kill most trees. Grading plans must also consider the tree specie's tolerance as well as their condition.



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- The barricade should stand as a signal against certain practices:
- No storage of equipment inside the barricade
- No dumping of petroleum products or other chemicals inside the barricade
- No burial of debris within 100' of barricades
- No fires within 100 yards of barricades
- The area underneath valuable trees and inside the barricades should be cleared or worked with hand tools.
- All underground power, water, telephone lines, etc., should be outside the tree's drip line whenever possible. Consulting an arborist about placement and trenching techniques is vital.
- Do not allow trees to stand in water. Submersion of the roots for periods up to 30 days can kill trees.
- If the tree is barricaded and all the above precautions are taken, a tree has an excellent chance of survival.