

## BEWARE OF ITINERANT TREE EXPERTS

The Illinois Tree Expert Licensing Law passed out of existence this summer.

According to James A. Fizzell, University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Horticulturist in Cook County this appears to have been an open invitation to some people to get into the tree trimming business.

These people cruise neighborhoods looking for likely customers and pass themselves off as tree experts when in reality they know very little about trimming trees, says Fizzell.

Before you hire anyone to work on your trees do some checking on the company.

Call the Better Business Bureau to see if complaints have been received about the firm.

Check to see if the firm has been licensed. Even though there is no longer a licensing law, reputable firms have been licensed up to now.

In order to have been licensed arborists must have passed a difficult exam on insects, diseases, tree identification and other aspects of tree care.

Also most reputable tree firms tend to belong to the professional associations, the National Arborist Association, and the International Society of Arboriculture.

It is also important when contracting for tree work to specify what kind of work is to be done.

Arborists may quote widely different prices on the same trees because of differences in the understanding what is to be done. The National Arborist Association, has four classes or types of pruning on which the prices for jobs are based. The first class is FINE PRUNING. This is the removal of dead, dying, diseased, interfering, objectionable, and weak branches, 1/2 inch in diameter and up.

The second class is MEDIUM PRUNING which is the same as the first class in all respects. The difference being that only larger branches of one inch in diameter and up are pruned.

The third class is SAFETY PRUNING. This is the removal of dead, diseased or weak branches large enough to cause injury if they fell on someone.

The fourth class is CUT BACK or TOPPING. This is the reduction of tops, sides, under branches or individual limbs, and is not very healthy for the trees.

Tree removal and spraying are other categories separate from tree pruning. Again, hire only reputable tree specialists for tree removal and spraying.

People spraying trees must be licensed by the Illinois Department of Agriculture as Spray Applicators.

Pruning, spraying and removing trees can be expensive and even more so if unqualified people do the work and it has to be redone.

Reputable firms will be more than happy to show you their qualifications.

Members of the Illinois Arborist Association are presently developing a Tree Expert Certification program which will be in effect next year.

**James A. Fizzell, Sr. Extension Adviser  
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## ARBORICULTURE — A PROFESSION — NOT A TRADE

Through the ages, from the beginning of time, man has marvelled at and adored — yes, paid homage to, and worshipped the beauty and majesty of his companions — the trees.

From the Tree of Knowledge (the tree of good and evil) in the Garden of Eden, to The Ash, Yggdrasil, of the Nordic Gods, to the zebu; the man tree of the Aztecs — to our own Joyce Kilmer — nothing else has so fired man's imagination and prompted reverence as the trees — providing him protection against danger and the elements, food to eat and beauty to see. Realizing a relationship of interdependence, man early became a keeper of trees. First, as a primitive woodsman, hewing and burning to build and also to keep the woods and the wolf away from his door. Later, man became a logger, sawyer, forester and after centuries, — lastly, because of conditions, unfavorable for thrifty tree growth, brought about by man himself — man became an arborist. Essentially an arborist is an exponent of the arboricultural profession — the art of planting, treating, and managing trees and other woody plants. A person, who, because of training and ethics, is qualified to cultivate trees individually or collectively for a consideration of a fee.

The forester cultivates trees collectively to realize a cash crop — the arborist generally treats trees individually to promote and preserve intangibles such as protection, beauty, shade, concealment, sentiment and history.

Today, because of conditions, harmful and abnormal to trees, brought about by man's "civilization" and gregarious habits, the services of thoroughly trained and ethical arborists are increasingly in demand.

Antecedent to the arborist came the "tree man" and his contemporary the tree surgeon; two categories of treeworkers, generally have acquired their experience through manual training only.

Unfortunately, however, the tree man and the tree surgeon were accompanied by the tree "quack", tree "gyps", tree "skinners" or whatever other name the duped tree owner considered appropriate. Today, tree "quacks", because of public apathy and gullibility, are still doing a thriving business, peddling worthless if not harmful "miracle cures", degrading the reputation and public esteem of the legitimate arborist. A few years ago in the state of Illinois, no fewer than twelve "cures" ranging from "intravenous" injections to chemotherapeutic soils were offered for the Dutch elm disease.

1953, in Stockholm, Prof. Romell of the Royal Forest Research Institute, after glancing through a "paper" by one certain Dr. X., peddling intravenous "cures" for the Dutch elm disease in the Midwest, unbelievably muttered "witchery — medieval". Still in the U.S.A., such tree rackets flourish — nurtured by public complacency and gullibility.

Not so very long ago a diploma in medicine or surgery could be had by correspondence with no questions asked when the "doctor" hung out his shingle. Today, such practices are not only illegal but certainly no one of average intelligence will consult a doctor not properly accredited and possessing a good reputation.

Today, the medical profession enjoys public respect, trust and confidence. The public knows that before being licensed to practice, every doctor has had to complete years of academic studies and arduous internship. A doctor because of malpractices and

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