

SAVING TREES FROM SUBTLE DEATH DUE TO CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

While most people wouldn't intentionally harm their trees, understory or ground cover as they add value to their property, landscaped green spaces can ultimately pay the price for residential, commercial, and other construction projects. It may be a commercial project, or a new house planned on a single lot or, more often, an improvement project of some kind where the trees, understory and ground cover have long been a part of the landscape. In most cases, the damage to the vegetation is as subtle as it is unintentional, and the health of the vegetation, and trees in particular, slowly declines.

That's why it is so critical to take steps to keep trees and other vegetation safe and healthy throughout the construction process.

PLAN NOW TO PREVENT COSTLY PROBLEMS LATER

Five basic steps can help you save your trees and other vegetation from death by construction.

1. **Map your trees and other important vegetation areas.** Before any work begins, sketch out the location of the trees and vegetation areas on your property relative to the proposed project.
2. **Make objective decisions.** Outline which trees and vegetation areas should stay, which can or should be removed, and which ones need some work. It is best to get the advice of a certified Arborist for the tree work during this step. A professional Landscape Architect can also be of assistance for other vegetative planning and decisions.
3. **Add to your map.** For those trees and vegetative areas to be saved, add circles on your map delineating the vegetative areas and the dripline and root zone of each tree. Avoid these areas when determining locations for trucks entering and exiting your property, any onsite parking and maneuvering, and the storage of excavated soil and/or building materials as these activities can compact the soil and root zones of the trees and vegetation.
4. **Discuss with contractors.** Have a candid discussion with any contractors you are considering for the project so everyone is on the same page. They will then understand you have given your trees and other vegetative areas careful thought and are serious about preventing injury to them. Again, your landscaping is a valuable part of your property and you don't want those areas disturbed or, worse yet, destroyed.
5. **Permitting.** If you are planning on any vegetative removal, please visit the County's website for information on any necessary permitting requirements: <https://waukeshacounty-002-us.govstack.com/parks-and-land-use/planning-and-zoning/zoning-and-land-use-information/>, or contact the Planner of the Day at pod@waukeshacounty.gov or at (262) 548-7790.