



## Tree Evaluation

Evaluating trees for structural defects and hazards is both difficult and time consuming. When trees are evaluated for structural defects, a thorough inspection of a tree's branches, trunk, root crown and area occupied by the root system is essential in detecting structural defects. A qualified person should evaluate trees for defects and structure. Questions for evaluating trees include:

What is the history of the tree? A tree whose roots have been pruned or damaged by construction activities or the placement of underground utilities may be structurally compromised. The loss or dropping of large limbs can indicate serious structural damage.

Is the tree dead or dying? Dead or dying trees should be removed immediately by qualified personnel.

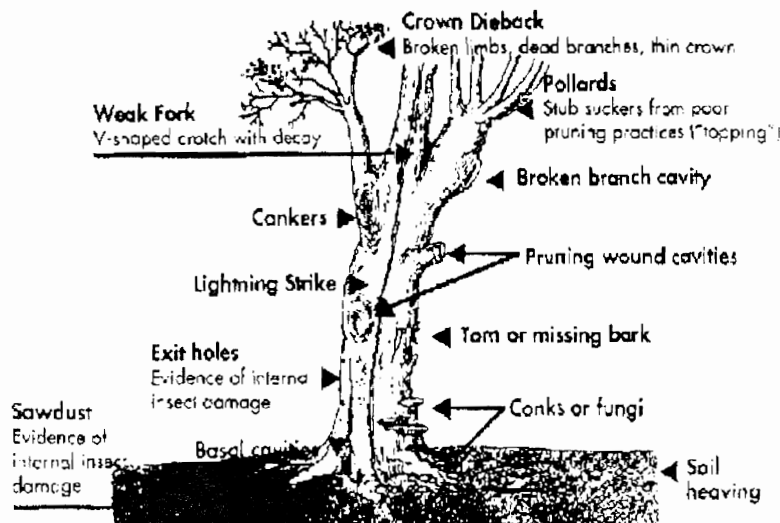
Are there dead branches within the tree canopy? Dead branches can indicate health problems within a tree as well as being an accident waiting to happen. Large dead branches should be removed immediately.

What are the structural conditions of the tree? Branches that rub together cause weak spots and should be removed. Deep cracks in a tree's trunk or limbs should be evaluated for weakness. Crotch cracks (cracks between limbs or trunks) and living branches that are growing in sharp angles are of structural concern.

Are rot, cankers or cavities present? Look for fungus fruiting bodies (conks), mushrooms, loose bark, cavities, cankers, or other areas of rot and loss of sound wood in limbs, trunks or roots.

Does the tree have unique growth structure? Unbalanced canopies, long and heavy horizontal branching, leans, sweeps and unusual canopy forms should be considered.

Is the tree in a "high risk" category? Examples of high risk trees include leaning trees growing with limited root space, trees with inherently weak or brittle wood, trees with multiple defects, and trees with large or dense crowns. Many failures in branches and trunks result from their loss in structural integrity due to wood decay. Evaluating decay in trees should be done by a qualified arborist, as it is a four step process. You must evaluate the symptoms and signs to locate decay; measure the size of a column of decayed wood; calculate the amount of structural strength lost because of the decay; and select a "threshold" for an acceptable amount of structural strength loss due to decay. The same methods are used for assessing root decay. Hopefully some of the information provided will help you identify any problems you might encounter when you examine the trees around your home.



## Community Tree Programs

Planning and implementing a community tree program will help our Borough take better advantage of the many values trees provide. Healthy and beautiful trees illustrate to visitors that the citizens and businesses of a community take pride and care about the places they live and work.

Trees are living entities that must be nurtured and cared for to remain healthy and cost effective. Without proper management and care trees existing in urban environments can cause disastrous problems.

Starting and sustaining a comprehensive community tree program has helped Southmont in by reducing storm damage and storm clean-up; by assuring appropriate trees are being planted in the proper areas; by increasing the safety of people and property through the removal of hazardous limbs and trees; by eliminating the burden caused by poor planning and management care.

Who benefits from a successful and sustainable community tree program? Everyone, but especially our children and grandchildren who will take pride in their community and who will live, play, and work in a richer, better and safer environment.

The key is making citizens aware of the substantial long-term benefits community tree programs can accomplish by providing proper stewardship to an important community asset, its trees.

## Hazardous Tree Definition!

A tree is considered hazardous when it has a structural defect that predisposes the tree or a portion of the tree to fail or fall on a target, resulting in property damage or personal injury.

Target areas that should be considered when evaluating a tree for hazard include structures, walkways, roadways, parking areas, play areas, picnic areas, and other places where people and property exist.

Sound trees or trees without structural defect may also be hazardous if they interfere with the routine activities of peoples such as obstructing motorists vision, and interfering with utilities, traffic signs and etc.

Trees should be inspected after major storms and documented in writing. The hazard can be reduced by planting trees known for sound structure and disease resistance. A good thought for planting is, planting the right tree in the right place to achieve the most benefits for the longest time.

# Borough Happenings

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## Fall Brush Clean-Up

Once again this year Southmont Borough provided a fall brush and limb clean-up program with the use of the Westmont chipper. The Street Commissioner reported that there was between 20-30 cubic yards of shredded material this year. The brush and limbs must be cut and no longer than 6' to 8' in length and no larger than 6" in diameter. No leaves or grass trimmings are accepted thorough this program. Usually the program is early in November, after residents have had a chance to do their fall yard and garden clean-up work. The shredded mulch is in the Borough park and can be used by the residents, if interested please call the Street Commissioner.

## Snow Removal

Once again, we must prepare ourselves with the inevitable signs of "old man" winter. As we prepare our equipment, we remind our residents that according to Penn Dot it is illegal to deposit or blow snow onto the roadways. It is under a Motor Code Book/ Vehicle Law of Pennsylvania that a property owner could be held liable for damages caused by throwing snow back onto the roadway. When digging out a driveway deposit snow "downstream" of the snowplows. This should help prevent the driveway from being plowed in by snow. Avoid creating high snow piles at intersections or driveways. Southmont Borough's winter maintenance program has three plowing priorities. First the high traffic volume streets or public transportation and school bus routes are taken care of, second are the side streets and less traveled areas. And last are the alleys.

The Borough has purchased a one and one half ton truck. We believe that the larger truck will move the snow more efficiently. The object of the winter maintenance program is to provide highway safety to the traveling public in the most reasonable period of time. Hopefully this year will not be a bad as the past years and we can provide that service to everyone.

### \*\*\* NOTICE: NEW SCHEDULE \*\*\*

Beginning January 1995 the new garbage collection schedule will be Wednesday collections changed to Tuesday and Thursday collections will remain the same. Thanks for your cooperation.

## From the Fire Chief

The cold weather is rapidly approaching. Along with snow comes an increase in the amount of residential fires. Many of these fires can be prevented. The following fire safety tips can help you maintain a fire safe home this winter.

**Kerosene Heaters:** Be sure your heater is in good working order. Inspect exhaust parts for carbon build-up. Be sure it has an emergency shut-off and be sure the room is properly vented. Use ONLY the manufacture recommended fuel. Never fill the heater when it is hot and keep all flammable liquids in an approved container and outdoors. Keep young children away from heaters, especially when they are wearing nightclothes.

**Stoves & Fireplaces:** Inspect and clean chimney annually.

Don't use excessive amounts of paper to start fires and never overbuild. These are two of the leading causes of house fires. NEVER use flammable liquids to start or accelerate a fire. Don't burn charcoal indoors, it can give off lethal amounts of carbon monoxide. Discard ashes properly outdoors in a metal container or away from the house. Keep damper open till all ashes are out. A closed damper could cause the fire to heat up and force toxic carbon monoxide into the house.

Your Fire Department wishes you and your family a safe and happy Holiday Season.

Remember, play it safe. Check all Christmas lights, replace worn

out sets, look for loose connections. Unplug everything before you leave your home or go to bed. Buy only flame retardant or non-combustible decorations. Check your upholstery and ash-trays after guests leave. Water fresh trees constantly and do not place near any heat source. If you haven't already done so, now is a good time to check your smoke detectors. You should have at least one smoke detector on every level of your home.

### And PLEASE don't drink and drive.

Many hours are devoted to training and attending fire schools. One member of our Dept. is the first firefighter in the state to pass the Firefighter II certification. We thank you for your support.

Reminder: If there is a hydrant near your home, do yourself a favor and keep it clear of snow in the event it is needed.

Thanks again!

## RECYCLING PAYS OFF !

Recycling efforts by Southmont Borough residents has already contributed to the reduction of the annual garbage collection fee. We are reducing the collection rate from \$80.00 to \$72.00. Since July of 1994 thru November we have decreased the solid waste volume by 21,000 pounds or 10.5 tons. There were 8,980#'s of clear glass, 4,980 #'s of colored glass, 3,740#'s of plastic and 3,300#'s of cans. Active recycling by all residents will help control and lower future costs. We have provided an enclosed shed for your convenience. If you are not recycling, we encourage you to join the program now.

The Collection Center at the Borough building is open from 7 A.M. to Dusk, Monday thru Saturday, and is closed Sundays. Currently the Center is closed Thursday mornings for dumping, however this schedule might change due to weather conditions. Please feel free to call if you are unsure. A reminder that proper depositing will minimize maintenance costs. Please remember to rinse containers to control insects and odors. Bins have been placed at the site for used plastic bags, however, we do not recycle plastic bags or cardboard boxes at this time.

We ask that you be considerate of the neighbors and try to deposit cans and glassware carefully to minimize the noise. Do not loudly dump the materials or slam the trailer doors. Remember this is your program, we are setting examples and ask that you keep up the good work. **RECYCLING PAYS!!!**

# More Facts

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## !! Get Involved !!

This year many residents have taken the opportunity to add to or improve OUR urban forest by sponsoring the planting of new trees or working with the Southmont Borough Shade Tree Commission on the removal/replanting program. Tree sponsors this year included: Renee Ahlstrom, Mrs. John J. Koval, dedicated to John J. Koval, Mr. and Mrs. William Krupa dedicated to Mrs. Betty Krupa, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pasquerilla dedicated to Mr. John Guarino, Mrs. Katharine K. Peterson dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. C.C. Korn, and William and Paulette Carstensen dedicated to Michael and Marie Chavatte. New trees have been planted on Diamond Blvd., Menoher Blvd., and Arlington St. The trees in the triangle have been sprayed and will be fertilized to enhance their development.

If you wish to become a \$100 sponsor or contribute any lesser amount, please complete the form on the back of the newsletter and mail your check to the Borough office. Smaller amounts will be accumulated and applied to the challenge grants requiring 50% matching funds. Challenge grants have been applied for by neighbors of Edward Street and Palliser Street. You and your neighbors can become involved in beautifying your street with trees by picking up a grant application at the Borough building and contacting the Shade Tree Commission. What better gift can you give yourself and your neighbor than a beautiful tree or group of trees to enjoy year round????

## << Celebrate Trees >>

Can you imagine our Borough without trees? Trees provide oxygen, filter pollutants, cool us in the summer and make our Borough a better place to live. Trees enhance and improve air quality, reduce street noise, prevent soil erosion and soften hard edges of buildings and pavement. Plant and protect trees. The more healthy trees we have the better. They reduce global warming because they absorb carbon dioxide.

## TREE CARE TIP

Raising the soil level around a tree will smother tree roots. Lowering the soil level also will do this. Never trench or roto-till around your trees. If soil is excavated the small fibrous roots that provide water and nutrients to the tree will be damaged and the tree's overall health will decline.

## # The Price of Neglect #

Without proper maintenance, trees can become a liability or even a safety hazard. For example:

1. A tree that interferes with a high voltage power line, can injure people and cause interruptions of electrical service.
2. Dead limbs and decaying trees can cause considerable damage to property and injury to persons.

Often it is better to remove a tree that is dead, dying or in poor condition.

Southmont Borough has a total of 1,100 municipal trees. A municipal tree is considered to be any tree growing between the street and sidewalk, or in the right-of-way of a public road.

Most trees (68%) are in fair to good condition, but 307 trees are dead, dying, or in poor condition.

The Southmont Borough Shade Tree Commission and Advisory Committee endeavors to ensure that Southmont remain a beautiful tree lined community.

Most of the borough street trees were planted during the 1920's and 1930's, they will have the potential to decline and die at about the same time.

Should the Commission wait until these trees were dead, Southmont Borough would become deforested within several years.

It would be neglect by the Commission to not plan for the inevitability of the end of the life span of the Norway Maple trees that beautify the streets of our Borough.

We must continue the removal and appropriate replacement of declining trees in order to maintain a growing, young tree population.

If you would like to become a part of the volunteer committee that advises and assists the Commission, please contact the Borough office.

We need and welcome your help.

We are losing one acre of forests every 10 seconds. The rainforests (home to half the world's species and many substances used in pharmaceuticals) are being destroyed at a rate of one football field size chunk per second.

## <<< ATTENTION >>>

Over the past couple of years, nearly 150 trees have been planted in our borough through the Municipal Tree Restoration Program (MTRP). A few of the streets included were Leila, Arlington, Orchard, Diamond, Olive State, etc.

The forester for the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, representatives from Penn State University, and the Southmont Shade Tree Commission regularly monitor the progress and growth of each tree and are responsible for seeing that these trees are properly maintained.

Residents are not to cut or prune any of these trees until the Shade Tree Commission chairman is personally notified. Failure to do so will jeopardize our chances to participate in future programs and, most importantly, could cause permanent damage to the tree.

As a reminder, you must obtain a permit at the Borough office before you prune or remove any municipal tree. No permit is required for removing dead wood from Municipal Trees.

When dealing with newly planted or young trees it is important to appreciate the fact that small twigs, if left on the tree, often grow into troublesome branches later in the life of the tree. The removal of small branches will only create fast healing wounds.

Research has found that "traditional" tree wound paint or dressing is really not effective in protecting a pruned cut from decay. Researchers actually found that untreated cuts heal better...

