

Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Tree Service

Developed by Linda McMulkin, CSU Extension-Pueblo County, using information from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)

1. Membership in or training from a professional organization?
 - a. International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
 - b. Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA)
 - c. American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA)
 - d. Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado (ALCC)
2. Proof of insurance
 - a. Ask for the insurance company's phone number if you aren't satisfied
 - b. Should carry personal and property damage insurance
 - c. Must carry workman's comp insurance
3. Necessary permits and licenses
4. Ask for references and check them, or visit sites where the company has done work.
5. Get more than one estimate.
6. Don't always accept the lowest bid. Consider the combination of:
 - a. Total price
 - b. Work to be done
 - c. Skill of workers
 - d. Protection of your property
7. Resist hiring individuals going door-to-door or offering bargains.
8. Good arborist use good practices
 - a. Don't top trees
 - b. Don't disfigure trees
 - c. Don't remove excessive amount of wood
 - d. Use proper equipment and don't leave climbing spikes in trees
9. Get it in writing!
 - a. When will the work be started and completed?
 - b. Who will be responsible for clean-up?
 - c. Is this the total price?
 - d. If I would like more to be done, what is your hourly rate?
 - e. Be sure to sign and date a written contract to avoid conflicts later
10. If hiring a company to spray, ask:
 - a. What pest is the chemical intended to control?
 - b. What product will be used and are there any environmental concerns?
 - c. Does the company have a commercial pesticide applicator's license?
 - d. Are worker's trained and supervised by licensed applicator?