

Press Release
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Severe Storm Damage to Trees

As severe weather moved through the area, it wreaked havoc to area trees. The first thing to do after a storm is to not panic and assess the situation. If the tree is tangled in power lines, do not approach or touch the tree and call your electric provider immediately. If the tree is not tangled in the power lines, then the first thing to do is remove any limbs or trees off of your house or that is blocking any access points to your utilities or property. Make sure to check for limbs that are dangling in the trees that could potentially fall on the house or on you and your family as you are out assessing the damage. After these precautions have been taken, then you can start fully assessing the damage.

When you start to assess the damage, do not panic and take your time. Depending on the damage, a professional arborist may be needed to be hired to help recover from the damage. Make sure when assessing the damage look the tree completely. Check to see if the trunk has any cracks, major limbs are cracked or if the soil has been disturbed as these are all signs of structural damage to the tree. If you are uncertain about the damage, it is best to contact an arborist as they have gone through extensive training on tree health. Please be cautious for arborist who go door to door trying to drum up business. It is in your best interest for you to do your due diligence to select the arborist that is right for you.

If hiring an arborist isn't an option for you, it is possible to take care of the tree yourself. Here are a few guidelines to follow:

1. **Start with the structure** — As I stated above any cracks in the trunk, cracks in large branches, or disturbed soil at the base of the trunk are signs of structural damage from which the tree may not be able to recover.
2. **Care for the canopy** — The canopy of a tree is where the vast majority of the leaves are located. A tree that has lost more than 50 percent of its canopy may not have enough energy to recover from the damage.
3. **Saw safety** — Never raise a conventional chainsaw above your chest. Powered pole saws are designed to reach up to higher branches. When using either a chainsaw or powered pole saw, make sure to check the area around you for no utility issues. Also make sure to wear hand and eye protection, and always read and follow the manufacturer's directions for any tool you use.

After the tree has been removed and you want recommendations for a replacement tree, please do not hesitate to contact Travis Carmichael, Horticulture and Community Development Extension Agent, at (620) 341-3220 or stop by the Lyon County Extension Office during normal business hours.