

Volume 1 Issue 4

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Hurricane
Season 2020

Out on a Limb Tree Care Tips for the Tampa Bay Region

Quote

“The best friend of earth of man is the tree. When we use the tree respectfully and economically, we have one of the greatest resources on the earth.”
– Frank Lloyd Wright

Hurricanes and Trees: Lessons learned in Florida

Hurricanes can be extremely damaging to our communities. During these storms trees can become hazardous and pose risks to personal safety and property.

Since 1992, when Hurricane Andrew struck South Florida, researchers at University of Florida/IFAS have been studying the impacts of hurricanes on the urban forest and trees.

The following is a series of lessons learned and recommendations drawn from these scientific investigations. If followed, they can help you reduce risks to safety and property, while ensuring that your trees continue to thrive.



1,000-year-old live oak following a major hurricane with 108 m.p.h. winds

Lesson: Higher the wind speed of the hurricane, the more likely trees will fail.
Recommendation: Establish and manage a healthy tree to improve wind resistance.

Lesson: Some species resist wind better than others.

Recommendation: Plant tree species that have been shown to be more wind resistant.

Recommendation: Consider removing over-mature and hazardous tree species that have demonstrated poor survival in hurricanes.

Lesson: As a group, palm species survive hurricanes better than broad-leaved and conifer trees.

Recommendation: Consider planting wind-resistant palm species

Lesson: Pines may show no immediate visible damage after hurricanes but may decline over time

Recommendation: Monitor pines carefully.

Lesson: Trees that lose all or some of their leaves in hurricanes are not necessarily dead.

Recommendation: Wait, watch for leaves, and monitor the tree's health.

Lesson: Native tree species survived better in South Florida hurricanes.

Recommendation: Consider native tree species when selecting trees for planting.

Lesson: Unhealthy and declining older trees are predisposed to damage.

Recommendation: Remove hazard trees before the wind does.

Lesson: Trees systematically pruned to meet or exceed national standards survive hurricanes better than poorly pruned or unpruned trees.

Recommendation: Begin a preventive pruning program for both young and mature trees following the guidance of an ISA Certified Arborist.

Lesson: Trees with more rooting space survive better.

Recommendation: Give trees enough rooting space based on their mature size.

Lesson: Good soil properties, such as adequate soil depth, a deep water table, and no compaction, help wind resistance.

Recommendation: Make sure that planting sites have 3 feet of soil depth with a deep water table to allow healthy root system development.

Lesson: Damaged root systems make trees vulnerable in the wind.

Recommendation: Do not damage or cut main support roots during construction.

Read more about what UF scientists

have to say about

Trees and Hurricanes

To learn more about what the University of Florida researchers learned about hurricanes and trees visit their web site at:

<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/treesandhurricanes/>

Please send in your questions and I will answer them via email or in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

Send your favorite tree picture and I will try to use it in the newsletter.

**Hurricanes and Trees
An online workshop:
May 19th 1pm and 7pm**

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**Hillsborough
County Florida**