



# Don't Top Trees!

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BULLETIN

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**T**ree topping is the senseless brutalizing of older trees. It puts an ugly scar on the landscape, sometimes in parks or along streets, but more often in yards and around business establishments. It remains a plague across America, although not as rampant as it used to be. Still, especially in smaller communities, the results of topping can be seen more than 100 years after its detrimental effects were recognized by pioneer arborist John Davey.

Not only is topping bad for the tree, it is a waste of money. Research has found that most people top trees because of fear that the tree is becoming "too large." By this these well-intentioned folks mean that they fear for their safety or their

buildings. But in most cases topping just contributes to greater danger from the resulting proliferation of weakly attached sprouts and the entrance of decay fungi.

Nationally, neither communities nor individuals are spending enough money on tree care. It makes no sense, then, to use these limited funds on the malpractice of topping. In this issue of the bulletin, we provide more details about the reasons why trees should not be topped. Just as importantly, we offer available alternatives.

Through better information, perhaps the scourge of topped trees can finally be eliminated from the land.