

Tree Risk Management Policy

The City of Gainesville has an active policy to maintain the safety of public lands from potentially hazardous trees. The City will strive to eliminate, in a timely fashion, any tree deemed hazardous. Priority shall be placed on trees deemed to carry the highest risk. The standard for rating the hazard of a tree is based on the measuring instrument developed by the City's Tree Advisory Board, which is consistent with the International Society of Arboriculture's twelve-point rating system. The City Arborist will administer this program and have final judgment in all matters concerning the mitigation measures taken for any tree deemed hazardous.

Standard of Care Statement

The City of Gainesville will meet or exceed all arboricultural industry standards in its tree risk management program through the following actions:

- Have a written policy regarding tree hazard management.
- Provide specialized training for all tree inspectors on identifying and evaluating structural defects in trees, developing risk ratings, and inspecting and evaluating tree-infrastructure conflicts. All inspectors will maintain Certified Arborist status through the International Society of Arboriculture.
- Examine at least 20% of trees on the public rights-of-way maintained by the City of Gainesville annually. This will be via a windshield risk assessment to identify trees that might be hazardous, so that the entire municipal area has been covered every five years.
- Undertake systematic inspections of trees on public property that exhibit symptoms indicative of advanced decline as illustrated in a recognized text on the evaluation of hazard trees in urban areas.
- Document the inspections and communicate the results to the appropriate entity if removal is warranted. If the tree is on private property, then advise Code Enforcement. If on public property, then to the City Arborist or counterpart within either the Alachua County government or the Florida Department of Transportation.
- Adhere to industry standards for general tree care activities, including the American national Standard Institute's standards for safety in arboricultural operations (Z133.1) and pruning (A300).
- City staff accomplishing tree work shall perform an inspection prior to working on any tree. Tree surgeons will abate defects and recommend trees for further assessment by the City Arborist, Urban Forestry Inspection or Tree Crew Supervisor.
- Goals and objectives for reducing tree failures will be included in management programs.