

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS TREE WORK



PREPARED BY WORKCOVER NSW, THE TREE CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA, THE NATIONAL ARBORISTS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TREE RESOURCES ASSOCIATION.

Tree work including tree removal, trimming and pruning can be dangerous. These FAQ's are to be used as a quick guide for engaging contractors to carry out tree work. Please note there is a detailed comprehensive document titled *WorkCover Code of Practice: Amenity Tree Industry 1998*.

1. What insurances should the contractor have?

The contractor should hold a current **workers compensation insurance policy** for their employees.

The contractor should also hold a current **public liability insurance policy**.

These insurance policies provide protection for you in the case of damage being caused to your property, your neighbour's property or people being injured while the work is being carried out.

The Certificate of Currency for Workers Compensation Insurance should be sighted and included with the job quote. In the employers information section check the legal name, trading name, ABN against the company details on the quote. The WIC code must be 95250. The Certificate of Currency must be no more than twelve months old.

2. What qualifications should the contractor have?

Work undertaken by inappropriately qualified contractors could result in major damage to your or your neighbour's property or in injury to people and may leave you liable for any costs associated with this.

WorkCover NSW recommends that for tree work carried out on the ground a minimum of one person holds the qualification of Certificate II in Horticulture (Arboriculture). All tree climbing work should be carried out by a person who holds a minimum Certificate II in Horticulture (Arboriculture) or be undertaking a course to obtain this qualification. All tree climbing work should be directly supervised by a person with a minimum qualification of Certificate III in Horticulture (Arboriculture).

These qualifications are consistent with the requirements of the Australian Standard AS4373: 2007 Pruning Amenity Trees.

Whilst WorkCover NSW does not recommend specific contractors, there are two Industry Associations; the Tree Contractors Association of Australia (www.tcaa.com.au) and the National Arborists Association of Australia (www.naaa.net.au) that may be able to assist you in making an informed choice.

3. How do I know if the contractor is going to do the job safely?

You should obtain a written quote from the contractor that contains the contact details and ABN of the contractor.

All tree work should be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the WorkCover *Code of Practice: Amenity Tree Industry 1998*.

The contractor should be able to explain to you what measures they will be taking to ensure the safety of people affected by the work, such as neighbours and people walking or driving past where the work is being carried out.

If the work is being carried out near power lines the contractor must maintain a safe distance from the power lines or be an “accredited person” to work within what are known as “approach distances”. If work is being carried out on a tree that is within 3 metres of any power line including a service line, then the person carrying out the work must be an accredited person who has completed a recognised course of training and the contractor should be able to explain this to you and provide evidence of any accreditation they have.

4. How can I help make sure the job is done safely?

At all times you should ensure that you or other people remain outside of the danger areas identified by the contractor. Failure to follow the contractors instructions could result in injury to yourself or tree workers.

Reputable contractors will check for hazards prior to commencing work. If however you are aware of any dangers on your property that could cause harm, you should advise the contractor. This could be that there is an underground tank, underground services such as gas, electricity or plumbing near the trees.

5. Do I need approval to remove or prune trees?

As requirements may vary, you should check with your local council.

6. How do I get further information on tree work safety?

A copy of the *WorkCover Code of Practice: Amenity Tree Industry 1998* can be obtained from WorkCover NSW by calling **13 10 50** or downloaded directly from www.workcover.nsw.gov.au.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the following organisations:

- WorkCover's Rural Industry Team: 1800 300 377 or 8882 4235 between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.
- The Tree Contractors Association of Australia: 1300 660 379 (www.tcaa.com.au).
- The National Arborists Association of Australia: 02 4739 4339 (www.naaa.net.au).
- The Local Government Tree Resources Association (www.lgtra.com).



WorkCover NSW, 92 – 100 Donnison St, Gosford NSW 2250
Locked Bag 2906 Lisarow NSW 2252
WorkCover Assistance Service 13 10 50
Website www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
Catalogue No.5384 © WorkCover NSW 1207