

## Why Tree Topping is Bad

There are plenty of good science-based reasons that topping trees is terrible for tree health.

It has been discredited as a pruning practice for decades, a fact the arboricultural industry has been promoting years. Good urban forestry programs do not allow tree topping as part of their best management practices and tree trimming standards.

- Topping stresses and often kill trees because it removes the leaves that produce food for the tree. The resulting wounds expose the tree to insect attacks and diseases.
- Topping cuts create decay. The rapidly growing sprouts that emerge at that point as the tree scrambles to grow new leaf cover pose a high risk to public safety because they are weakly attached.
- Topping destroys a tree's natural shape and is very ugly because trees have an excellent natural shape unique to each species.
- Topping is expensive and unnecessary, creating an on-going liability – if the tree survives - which is costly to maintain and makes for a future hazard where the tree has to be removed and replaced.
- Topping is prohibited by city code and can result in thousands of dollars in fines and replacement costs.
- Topping jeopardizes our Tree City USA status, a highly prized designation for cities that value their trees and exemplify good environmental stewardship.