

As winter fades (however slowly) and we start to assess the damage to yards, landscaping, sidewalks and driveways, it's easy to forget how important trees are in Brandon. Trees are usually regarded as being forest occupants, and we mostly don't really think that trees in the town should get any different treatment.

Living in a town environment, our trees are subject to hazards that don't occur in forests. Traffic, salt, construction, you name it and our trees have to cope. The urban canopy (town trees) should get special consideration because of these hazards, and the State has several statutes that address town trees.

One of the statutes is that each town in Vermont should have a tree warden. The tree warden is not a forester or an arborist, but a person appointed by the Select Board whose sole responsibility is to make sure urban trees are not cut down or excessively pruned without an evaluation of tree health and the risk the trees might pose to individuals, property and traffic. That evaluation has to be done by the tree warden and professional arborists. The statutes also specify a penalty if a tree is cut down without tree warden involvement and agreement.

This doesn't mean that the Tree Warden is 'against' property owners and their trees. It means that we need to work together to keep our trees performing as temperature modulators, noise mitigators, air cleaners, carbon sinks, mood elevators as well as keeping Brandon beautiful.

If you have a tree between the road and about 25' from the centerline that needs attention or you think is a hazard, please contact me.

Thanks

Neil Silins

Brandon Tree Warden

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