

Honest Business Practices

The Maryland Tree Care Law requires a licensed expert to comply with all laws and regulations pertaining to tree expert services. By law, this is what you should expect from your tree care company.

Advertising should not be false or misleading. It should not misrepresent the type of work, the academic or professional qualifications or affiliations, or the experience or licensing status of the arborist or company.

A written **Contract** with the client is required by law. It should include:

- Licensed tree expert's name, license number, name of licensee's business entity, address, and phone number
- Name, address, and phone number of the client
- Objective and scope of services
- Anticipated dates of the licensed tree expert's work on the project
- Implications of any deviation from ANSI standards
- Amount and method of remuneration for the services
- Dated signatures of the licensed tree expert or the licensed tree expert's designee and the client or the client's designee

Amendments to the contract must be in writing and signed and dated by the licensed tree expert's designee and the client. No more than 1/3 of the estimated cost of the job may be required as a deposit.

Ethical business practices must be maintained by a licensed tree care company, which includes:

- performing tree expert services only if qualified to do so by education or experience
- acting with reasonable care and competence
- accepting positions which would not cause personal or professional interests to conflict with responsibilities
- accepting a tree care project only if benefit can reasonably be expected, continuing treatment only when benefit can reasonably be expected, charging only for services rendered, and fully informing clients served of the nature and possible effects of services rendered
- accepting compensation from only one employer for the same service unless all parties involved are informed and consent
- notifying the client promptly when the termination or interruption of service during the term of a contract is expected

If **Access** to adjacent private property is needed as a work area, or to gain access to the client's property, written permission of the owner of private property adjacent to the client's property is required by law.

Supervision of the quality and content of all work performed for the client is the responsibility of the licensed tree expert.

A licensed tree expert shall **Maintain Records** of all of the licensee's client contracts for tree expert services for 3 years after completion of a project. If requested by a current or former client, the licensed tree expert shall release a copy of the written record to the client or former client, and may require a client or former client to pay the reasonable cost of providing the records requested.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources regulates the tree care industry and is responsible for investigating violations of the Tree Care Law. Complaints about companies that are operating without a license, or are not fulfilling the legal requirements of licensing, should be made to the MD DNR.