

# Trees and High Winds

## “Hurricane Season” in Gainesville!



## Healthy trees provide many benefits...

The oxygen we breathe.

Storm water attenuation (flood control and pollution prevention).

Energy conservation (shading and cooling).

Re-moisten air through evapotranspiration (stabilizing the rain cycle).

Global warming slowed (carbon sequestration).

Wildlife Habitat.



Gainesville has the highest “tree canopy coverage” of any municipality in the United States – 50%. During storms, the winds pass over the city at a height of 55’ in the areas with good tree cover.

**“Although falling trees are thought to be a big safety concern for residents in areas affected by hurricanes...trees, especially those in clusters, may actually shelter homes from the wind if they are healthy and wind resistant.”**

**Annie Hermansen-Baez  
USDA Forest Service**

**Downtown Gainesville – sheltered by trees.**

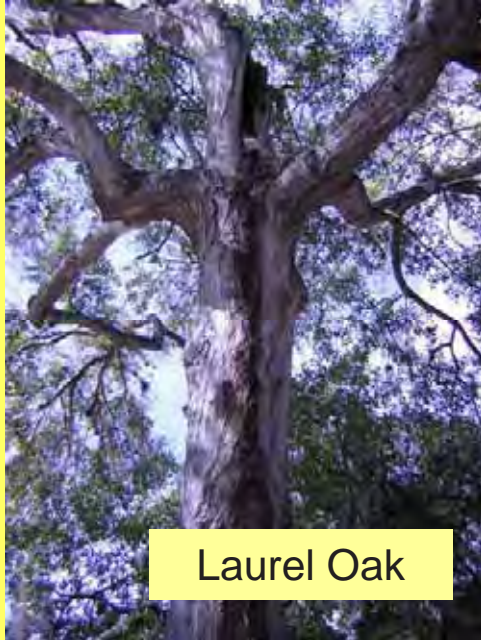


**Storm events vary – hurricanes, tornados, downbursts.**



**Some trees “fail.” The best protection you can provide your home, your neighbors and the public is to evaluate your trees annually.**

## Learn about the trees in your yard!



Laurel Oak



Live Oak

Laurel Oaks and Live Oaks initially appear similar. However, scientific research has shown that Live Oaks are one of the strongest trees in the face of hurricane-force winds.

[http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/urbanforestry/Resources/PDF%20downloads/Duryea\\_1996.pdf](http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/urbanforestry/Resources/PDF%20downloads/Duryea_1996.pdf)

Laurel Oaks tend to grow fast, decay easily, and die young! Most storm failures are laurel oaks (far more than pines).



**Dead limbs, large hollows, trunk decay – these are symptoms you can see. Don't ignore them!**

**A professional arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture can provide a professional opinion.**

<http://www.isa-arbor.com/findArborist/verifyArbByLoc.aspx>



**Nature Operations (393-8171) can provide you with names of private sector consultants who can evaluate trees in your yard.**

**During storm emergencies, 70% to 80% of trees blocking roads actually fall from private property! By assessing the trees in your yard and removing those in poor condition, you protect your property and make Gainesville safer.**



**Healthy trees protect. Decaying trees are a liability.**



When storms hit Gainesville, trees do fail. Residents call to report trees blocking roads. 393-8161 (M-Thur, 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM) or 911 after hours. Reports are evaluated, prioritized, and dispatched.

**TREES FALLING OFTEN BRING DOWN UTILITY LINES!**

-- **POWER LINES**  
-- **ALWAYS** assume  
they are energized  
and **STAY AWAY!**



Home-owner generators can back-feed lines. So even if your electrical service is out, **DON'T ASSUME THE WIRES ARE DEAD.**

**Even if wires are not involved, other hazards make situations unsafe. Stay away from downed trees in the road!**



**Hanging branches can (and will) fall.**

**Limbs supporting falling trees can break, and the tree will roll!**

**Fallen trees are cleared from the road as soon as possible according to the following priorities:**

- 1. Main corridors leading to hospitals, law enforcement and fire stations, and the Public Works Compound.**
- 2. Trees with no electric line involvement.**
- 3. After Gainesville Regional Utilities personnel complete their work, tree removal crews can begin their work.**
- 4. Neighborhoods, like Brywood, where a single entrance blocked means no one can get in or out.**
- 5. Fallen trees require attention by employees with different skill levels. Assignments to clear the road of large trees that have fallen are dispatched as soon as the appropriate personnel can be made available.**

**The decision to use your personal chainsaw to remove a downed tree or branch should be made carefully. You'll need:**

- Proper personal protection equipment (e.g. hard hat, chaps, gloves, hearing protection, safety glasses, heavy work boots).**
- A work area that is safe for you and others.**
- Knowledge about tree hazards.**
- Knowledge about operating a chain-saw safely.**

**Important information is available on-line.**

**<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/EP/EP29100.pdf>**



**Trees are an important part of Gainesville's heritage.**

## Tree Removal Permits

When a storm brings down many trees, Alachua County and the City of Gainesville establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Trees that “fail” during such storms do not require a tree removal permit. “Failure” means breaking, splitting, or in other ways indicating a tree is in danger of falling.

When operations return to normal, the basic requirements for tree removal permits go back into effect. For more information, see:

<http://www.cityofgainesville.org/GOVERNMENT/CityDepartmentsNZ/NatureOperationsDivision/TreeRemovalRegulations/tabid/99/Default.aspx>

## It's important to replant!



Roper Park

The City's *Tree-mendous Gainesville* program aims to plant strong trees for a future urban forest. If you know a place for a tree in front of your home and you are willing to water it, please call 393-8171 and volunteer to be a *Tree Sponsor*. At no cost to you, a young shade tree will be planted.

Our goal is to transform Gainesville's urban forest so in the future the community will be protected by trees of strong species. An urban forest of strong trees will provide shelter and have many fewer failures during major storms.

## STRONG TREE SPECIES FOR A STRONG URBAN FOREST:

- \*Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)
- \*Sand Live Oak (*Quercus geminata*)
- \*Bluff Oak (*Quercus austrina*)
- \*Basket Oak (*Quercus michauxii*)
- Southern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata*)
- Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)
- Southern Red Cedar (*Juniperus silicola*)
- \*Florida Maple (*Acer barbatum*)
- \*Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*)
- Spruce Pine (*Pinus glabra*)
- Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*),
- \*Florida Elm (*Ulmus floridana*),
- \*Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*),
- \*Hickory species (*Carya tomentosa*, *C. glabra*, etc.)
- \*Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*),
- Basswood (*Tilia Americana*),
- Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
- White Ash (*Fraxinus Americana*), and
- \*Native Holly species (*Ilex sp.*)

\*Especially resistant to strong winds.





For more information on Gainesville's trees:

Nature Operations Division

Urban Forestry Section

352-393-8171

