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Trimming a Neighbor's Tree, Dead Branches and NYS Tree Law

Occasionally, we have to or are asked by a client to remove a branch, dead or alive, from a tree on a neighbor's property that is hanging over the property line. Removing dead tree branches is especially important to prevent falling debris, protect people and property or the tree's health or other reasons. Dead branches, left alone, can encourage pests and diseases to enter and spread in the tree, making the tree more dangerous.



Vinnie Drzewucki
Cornell Cooperative Extension of
Nassau County
Senior CNLP & Certified
Arborist

Why Remove Dead Tree Branches?

For Safety and Property Protection.

- Prevent Falling Debris: Dead branches are weak and can break off easily, especially during storms or high winds, creating a hazard for people and property.
- Protect Structures: Falling branches can cause significant damage to roofs, cars, fences, and power lines, leading to costly repairs.
- Avoid Injuries: The most critical safety reason is to prevent serious injury or death to people or animals from a falling dead branch.

For the Health and Vitality of the Tree

- Conserve Resources: A tree will try to send nutrients and water to a dead branch, wasting energy that could be used to support healthy parts and overall growth.
- Prevent Pest Infestation: Peeling bark on dead branches creates an entry point for insects like termites and carpenter ants, disease and decay which can then spread to other parts of the tree or nearby trees and structures.
- Halt Disease Spread: A dead branch can be a host for fungal growth or disease, which could then spread to the rest of the tree.

For Property Appearance

- Improve Aesthetics: Dead branches detract from the tree's appearance and the overall beauty of your landscape.
- Enhance Overall Property Health and Value: Removing dead branches contributes to a well-maintained and healthy property by promoting better

(continued on Page 7)

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Trimming a Neighbor's Tree

growth and a more appealing look and higher property value. Well maintained landscapes can add 15-20% more value to the property.

What Does the Law Say About Trimming a Neighbor's Tree?

In New York State, are you allowed to trim a neighbor's tree that's hanging into your property?

Yes, in New York State, it is written in the tree laws that you can legally trim or remove branches from a neighbor's tree that hang over your property, but you must do so without going onto their property or damaging the tree beyond

the overhanging branches. You are responsible for trimming only up to the property line and for the safe disposal of the branches you remove. It's also a good idea to notify your neighbor before trimming, and if the tree is large or you are not educated in proper pruning techniques and tree health care, consider hiring a professional service, such as an ISA Certified Arborist to avoid accidental damage that you would be held legally and financially responsible for.

Summary of Tree Trimming Rights in New York State

- Trim to the Property Line:
You have the right to trim branches and

(continued on Page 17)

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From the Publisher's Desk.... Jerry Siani, Editor and Publisher

Many of the articles appearing in our monthly editions are offered by individuals who are recognized for their expertise in the Green Industry. Most operate their own successful green industry firms and can be contacted directly for further information about their articles or their own services.

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About our writers...

Vinnie Drzewucki

Vinnie Drzewucki of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County, is Horticulture educator, a Senior Lifetime Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (CNLP) and ISA Certified Arborist providing professional educational topics pesticide use, integrated pest management (IPM) and best management practices in horticulture and arboriculture including CNLP and ISA certifications. For questions, diagnostic and soil testing services contact Vinnie directly at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County's Environmental Horticulture Program Phone: 516-832-2591 ext. 202, email: vad37@cornell.edu or visit the website at: www.ccenassau.org



Paul Sachs

of North Country Organics will be answering reader's questions on soil and organic matters. Got a question? Write to Paul, c/o NY LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR, or call him at North Country Organics, (802) 222-4277 email pds@norganics.com



Evan Dackow

Evan Dackow Vice President Jolly Green Tree and Shrub Care, I.S.A. Board Certified Master Arborist NY5666-B, TRAQ certified. Nassau Suffolk Landscape and Grounds Association - Executive Board of Directors, LIAA - President



Nick Menchyk

graduated from Clemson University with a B.S. in turfgrass management and a Ph.D in Plant and Environmental Science in 2007 and 2012, respectively. While a graduate student at Clemson, Nick focused on improving foliar fertilization efficiency and turfgrass physiology. Nick began teaching at Farmingdale State College in the fall of 2014 where he continues to educate students about turfgrass best management practices. He can be reached at nicholas.menchyk@farmingdale.edu



Roger Feit

...author "emeritus"

Creator of Quality Tree Service, and now of Treewise, The Organic Experts, offers insights on how small businesses can become more profitable and easier to operate. A former USA national amateur surfing champion, he has been featured in the NY Times, ABC TV News, Channel 55 and local news & radio programs (631) 324-4239



Persons interested in submitting articles may contact us at

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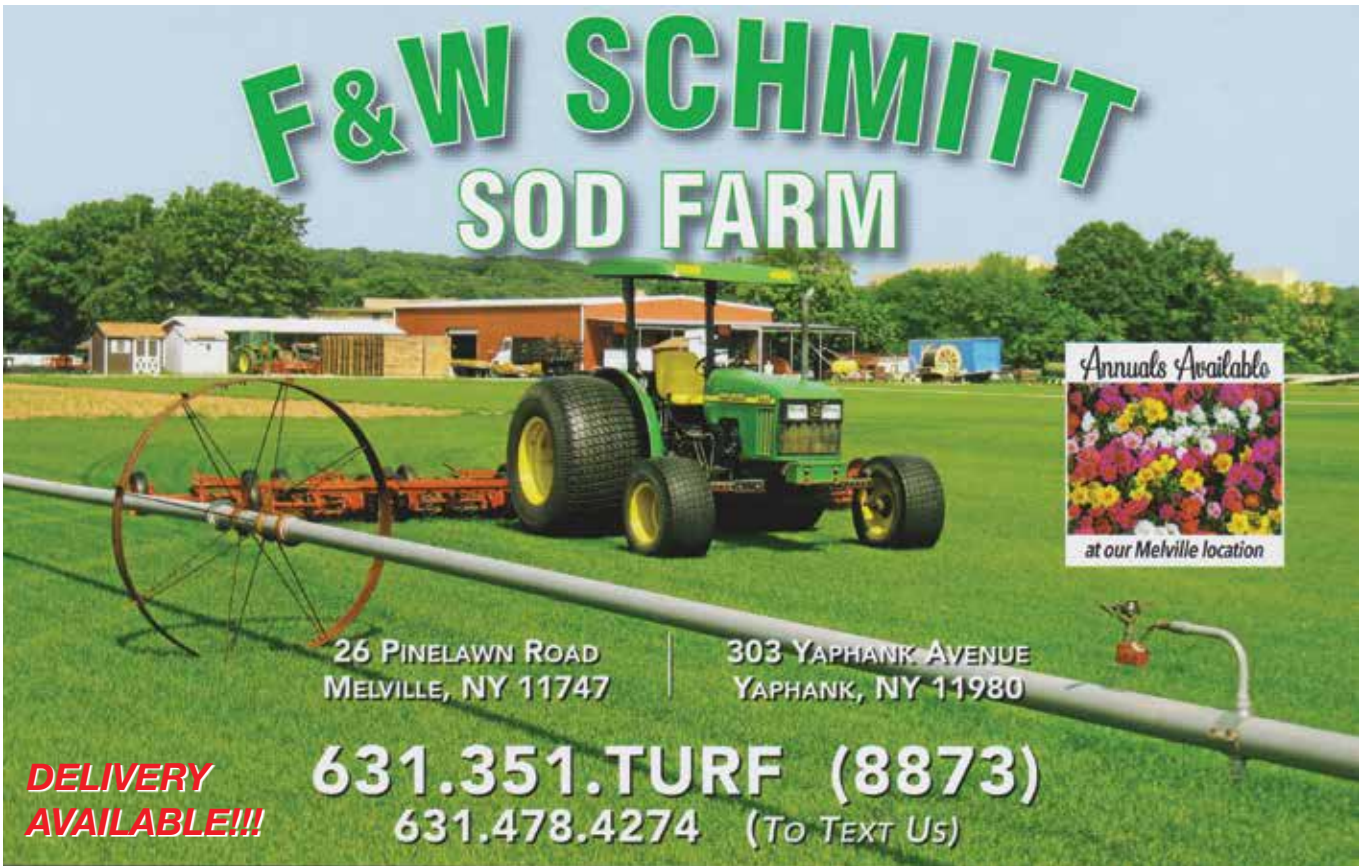
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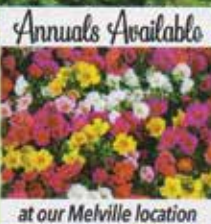
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Question: How can I protect my customers' lawns from disease without using fungicides?

Answer: The simultaneous occurrence of a pathogen and a suitable host does not necessarily result in infection. Other conditions need to be favorable for pathogens to succeed. These conditions include but are not limited to temperature, humidity, precipitation (rain or snow), base fertility balance, pH, nitrogen management, irrigation management, height of cut, soil biological activity, and plant stress.

Like the human body, a plant has the ability to protect itself from diseases. Plants produce many different chemical compounds that are toxic to fungal pathogens. The ability of the plant to successfully resist disease depends on many different factors. When plants are stressed compounds called oxidants accumulate and cause the breakdown of lipids, proteins, and nucleic acids. This further stresses the turf plant. The plant responds by using a lot of energy to create more lipids and other cell components that were oxidized. However, photosynthesis occurring in turf during stressful periods is often producing less energy than is being consumed because of heat, drought, or often height of cut. If turf is mowed too closely, less leaf surface area is exposed to synthesize energy from the sun. As stress increases and energy production decreases, the plant cannot produce defensive chemicals and soon becomes defenseless against pathogens.



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Other protection comes from the soil or, more accurately, from the soil organisms. As cliché as it may sound, there is truth to the axiom that a healthy soil promotes healthy plants. There are thousands of different organisms in the soil that exist for two common purposes—to survive and to reproduce. The most limiting factors to their existence are resources such as food, water and a proper atmosphere. If these organisms were given an unlimited supply of these resources, their populations would increase beyond the earth's spatial capacity in a matter of weeks. Soil organisms must compete with each other for the limited number of resources in their habitat. As resources dwindle, certain segments of the biomass may become dormant or die off, giving surviving organisms a distinct competitive advantage. If those surviving organisms are plant pathogens, then

(continued on Page 13)



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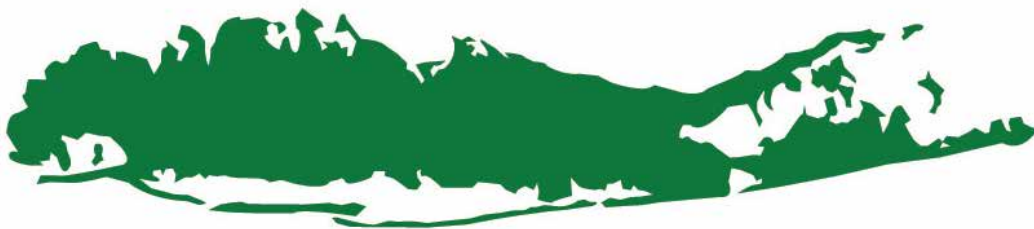
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According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, to become a NYSDEC certified pesticide applicator, you must be at least 17 (technician) or 18 (commercial), complete approved training or gain experience, pass a core and category-specific pesticide exam, and apply for the license with the NYSDEC. The process involves demonstrating practical knowledge of pesticide use through exams and ensuring you meet the specific requirements for the license category you need (e.g., commercial, private, or technician).

Step 1: Meet eligibility requirements

- Age: Be at least 17 for a technician license or 18 for a certified commercial applicator license.
- Experience/Training: Complete an approved pesticide training course, have at least one year of full-time experience using pesticides in your desired category within the last three years, or meet specific educational requirements (like an associate degree or higher).

Step 2: Prepare for and pass the exams

- Pass two separate written exams: a core exam on general pesticide safety and a category-specific exam for the type of pest control work you will do.
- Exam formats: You can take computer-based exams at a testing center, online from a private location, or a paper-based exam at a DEC regional office.

The NYSDEC pesticide exam formats include 50 multiple-choice questions and are closed-book. The exams test competency in general safety topics and are timed to give you two hours to complete them.

- Format: The exams are multiple-choice.
- Number of questions: There are 50 questions on the exam.
- Timing: You will have a two-hour time limit to complete the exam.
- Materials: The exams are closed-book, meaning you cannot use reference materials during the test.

Step 3: Apply for the license

- Application: Submit an application to the NYSDEC.
- Fees: Pay the required license fee. You may need to pay separately for business registration if applicable.
- DMV photo: You must also have a photograph on file with the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to receive your photo ID card. You can have a picture taken for free at a DMV office specifically for this purpose.

Step 4: Maintain certification

Continuing education: You must maintain your certification through continuing education or recertification exams every few years, as required by the NYSDEC.


Cornell Cooperative Extension is offering 2, 30 Hour Pesticide Training Eligibility Online Courses for Category 3a Ornamentals and Turfgrass in November and December, 2025. When completed register to take the exams! Use the links below for more information and to register.

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Soil
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the microbial imbalance can be manifested as plant diseases. In some cases, poor soil conditions can cause an organism to change from being beneficial to pathogenic. Fusarium, for example, is a saprophytic fungus that normally decays organic residues but it can become a pathogen when it encounters poorly nourished roots. Unfortunately, its reputation is only that of a pest and it is usually treated with a fungicide, which often depletes or destroys other groups of beneficial organisms. Saprophytic organisms are extremely valuable for their production of carbon dioxide, the most consumed nutrient in a plant's diet.

A rich soil, as its name implies, contains a wealth of resources. Most of us imagine a rich soil to be one that contains an abundance of plant nutrients capable of producing excellent crops. The term, however, has a deeper meaning. Resources are in many forms and benefit many different parts of the soil system. Most of them are linked, either directly or indirectly, to one important soil component —organic matter. Although the fraction of a mineral soil that is organic matter is relatively small, the function of this component is responsible for the lion's share of the system's benefits. The proteins, carbohydrates, lignin, cellulose, fats, waxes, hemicellulose, humic substances, and other compounds that comprise the soil's organic fraction are






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resources for billions of soil organisms. Paying attention to the needs of these organisms with applications of compost, biostimulants, or organic fertilizers and mowing higher with sharp blades will go a long way toward eliminating disease without using fungicides.

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(more photos Page 19)

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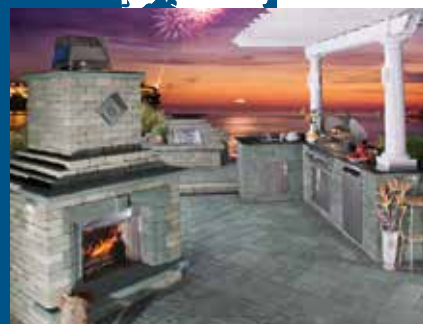
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Trimming a Neighbor's Tree

roots that encroach on your property.

- Stay on Your Property:
You cannot go onto your neighbor's property to access the branches or cut them from their side without permission.
- Do Not Harm the Tree:
You are prohibited from damaging the tree's main support system or causing its overall health to suffer. If trimming leads to the tree's instability or death, the property owner may be liable for damages, which can be up to three times the tree's value.

- Dispose of Debris:
You are responsible for the cleanup and disposal of the branches you trim.

Best Practices

- Notify the Neighbor: Inform the neighbor of your intentions before you trim the branches.
- Hire a Professional: If the branches are large or high, hire a qualified tree trimming service with an ISA certified arborist on staff to ensure the work is done safely and correctly, minimizing the risk

- of damaging the tree.
- Document Everything: Keep a record of the situation and any communication with the neighbor.
 - Consult Local Ordinances: Check local village or town ordinances, as they might have specific rules regarding tree trimming.

Sources:
<https://legalclarity.org/new-york-state-neighbor-law-for-trees/>
<https://betenskylaw.com/branching-out-into-tree-law/>

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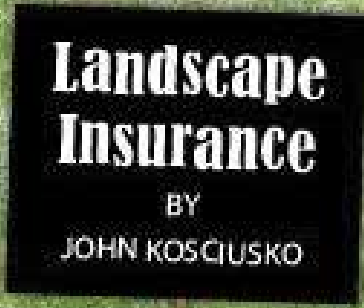

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Start spreading the news!!! NYSDEC's CleanSweepNY pesticide disposal program is coming to New York City and Long Island for Fall 2025.

Riverhead (Suffolk)– Tuesday, October 28, 2025
 Melville (Suffolk) – Wednesday, October 29, 2025
 North Merrick (Nassau) – Thursday, October 30, 2025
 Forest Park (Queens) – Friday, October 31, 2025

Participants from neighboring boroughs and counties are encouraged to participate at one of these locations.

CleanSweepNY services are provided to farmers, certified pesticide applicators and technicians, municipalities, city and county agencies, colleges, pesticide business, garden centers.

Homeowners are not eligible for this service.

The following chemical types are accepted free-of-charge from eligible pesticide applicators, farms, etc.:

- Pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, fungicides, disinfectants, sanitizers, antifoulants, etc.)

- Fertilizers
 - Paints (latex and oil-based), including spray paints and primers
 - Stains, varnishes, urethanes, shellacs, lacquers, etc.
- Also triple-rinsed HDPE #2 pesticide containers will be accepted at the collection events

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

To request a registration form or to obtain more information, please call NYSDEC CleanSweepNY staff at 518-225-8146 or contact CleanSweepNY by email at cleansweep@dec.ny.gov

Additional information can be found on NYSDEC's Website: <https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/pesticides/special-initiatives>

The CleanSweepNY program is a collaborative effort that would not be possible without the cooperation of our various partners, including NYSDOT and NYC Parks.

Since CleanSweepNY's inception in 2002, over 2 million pounds of chemical wastes have been collected for disposal!

We are looking forward to your participation! Thank you.

December Issue Will Close On Friday November 14th



WHITE PINE:
14'-25'

WHITE SPRUCE:
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SERBIAN SPRUCE:
8'-14'

NORWAY SPRUCE:
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From F-150, which celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2025, to F-600, F-Series' success is built on Ford's commitment to offer a diverse range of powertrains to meet every customer's needs. No other manufacturer offers the choices Ford does. From gas and diesel-powered workhorses to the PowerBoost Hybrid and all-electric F-150 Lightning – Ford continues to lead the charge in truck innovation.

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Hassett
"CUSTOMER FIRST"



3530 Sunrise Hwy., Wantagh, NY 11793

Hours: M-F 9am-8pm, Sat. 9am-6pm, Sun. 11am-4pm | www.hassettford.com



VIGLIOTTI LANDSCAPE SERVICE CENTER

NOVEMBER SPECIALS

100 Urban Avenue
Westbury NY, 11590
(516) 334 - 6600

Mon-Fri: 6 AM - 5 PM
Sat: 6 AM - 5 PM
Sun: 8 AM - 12 PM



HUGE SAVINGS!!!

FRIDAY NOV. 14TH - 8AM-5PM

ONE DAY SALE!

VIGLIOTTI FERTILIZERS



18-0-5
WITH
CAL-PLUS



14-0-3
W/ PELLET
LIME
2% IRON



20-0-4
50% SRN
W/ XCU
3% FE



20-0-5
30% MESA



25-0-5
51% MESA

2 CYCLE OILS



6.4 OZ BOTTLE
2.5 GALLON MIX
48/CASE



13 OZ BOTTLE
5 GALLON MIX
12/CASE



5 GAL PAIL
(MIXES 250 GAL)



HOLLY
TONE
50LB



PLANT
TONE
50LB



WOOD
ACE
12-3-6

9" CABBAGE/KALE



ARRIVING
DAILY!

LIME



PELLET
LIME



CAL-TURF
PRO LIME



PULVERIZED
LIME



TRUPER



SEYMOUR
MIDWEST



STIHL



LITTLE
WONDER