



Landscape Services

Safety Standard Operating Procedure

(Revised 7/2023)

Tree Protection

This SSOP provides guidance on the safe practice of **Tree Protection**. Large and/or small equipment may be used while protecting trees. As with any equipment or tool, the most basic premise for safe operation is reading and adhering to the manufacturer's instructions and warnings. This SSOP is not a substitute for the owner's manual(s) produced by the manufacturer.

Safety Requirements PPE Required: PPE requirements are highly tailored to specific work conditions. Generally speaking, sturdy work boots or closed toed shoes, gloves, and eye protection are recommended to have available. When entering an active construction site high-vis vests, hard hats, and eye protection are necessary. If using an airspade/air compressor, chainsaw, or other piece of equipment reference related SSOP for required PPE.

Safety Hazards: Vehicle, pedestrian, and construction site traffic, underground and overhead utilities, lifting, bending, overhead objects, dust, noise, sharp objects, blind spots, equipment malfunction, pinch points, hot or cold temperatures, and inclement weather.

Scheduled: Year-round observation. Seasonal efforts focused on campus events, such as tailgating. Scheduled as part of a construction project.

Horticultural Elements: Consider lifecycle needs of the tree and try to keep them consistent throughout the protection process, especially as it applies to construction. Example: Water requirements.

IPM: IPM is not typically a part of tree protection procedure. If questions or concerns arise, consult the University Arborist or FLMS Assistant Manager.

Above ground: Above ground parts of the tree should be protected from physical injury.

Below ground: Below ground parts of the tree should be protected from compaction and physical injury.

General tree injury, vandalism, hammocking, and tailgating: If you observe a tree being damaged or the aftermath of damage, contact the University Arborist or FMLS Assistant Manager immediately. In cases of vandalism, OSU Police should be contacted as well.

Construction: Many tree protection measures may be taken during the construction process and should be tailored to the specific situation. Common practices include but are not limited to: Installing and maintaining tree protection fence, preventative above ground pruning when necessary, installing or maintaining irrigation systems to the trees or otherwise ensuring the tree gets adequate water through the construction process, installing a thick mulch/woodchip layer under the tree canopy, airspading and root pruning, and routine site walks. If large or small equipment is used in the tree protection process, use all appropriate safety and PPE measures. Example: truck or gator operation, airspade

/air compressor operation, chainsaw operation. Tree protection expectations are written in the construction documents; thus, contractors have responsibility to prevent injury to trees. OSU FMLS is responsible for all other aspects of landscape care and tree protection. For more information See OSU's Arboretum Tree Care Plan and Standards Document. https://fm.okstate.edu/landscape-services/construction-standards/arboretum_protection_standards.html