



# THE CONNECTICUT ARBORIST

Volume XXIX, Number II

Connecticut Tree Protective Association, Inc.

Winter 2018-19

## CTPA Meeting Set to be Outstanding

The Connecticut Tree Protective Association is hard at work finalizing the details of the 2019 CTPA Annual Meeting. The Meeting will be held on January 17 at the Aqua Turf in Southington – the scene of many notable past CTPA meetings. This one, our 97<sup>th</sup>, should be as memorable as any of our previous ones.

### The Keynote Speaker

The keynote speaker for the educational program is Dr. Kevin T. Smith, of the US Forest Service. Kevin had been slated to speak at the 2018 CTPA Summer Meeting but had to withdraw for personal reasons. We are glad he is able to join us this January.

The title of Dr. Smith's talk is "Tree Infection and Wood Decay". Kevin is a plant physiologist for the US

Forest Service, based in Durham, NH. His research over the years has been an exploration of the defense processes of trees and on how wood decay fungi act. Based on this work, Kevin has published more than 125 research and educational articles. His current research includes:

- The recovery of surviving trees following injury from fires, storms and tree care practices
- The applicability and limitations of dendrochemistry in providing markers of environmental change, and
- The role of wood decay processes in replenishing essential elements to forest soils.

Dr. Smith describes the importance of his work as follows, "Mechanical injury, subsequent infection, and

environmental change are facts of life for wild, rural, and urban trees. These also have an impact on the diverse goals of forest management and wildlife conservation, on the quality of wood products, and on the safety and health trees in our communities. Maximizing the benefits of trees for forests and communities requires understanding how those goals are linked to tree biology and the tree's response to change."

Kevin Smith is a very good speaker whose subject is timely for all who work with trees in Connecticut. His talk, to take place in the afternoon of the Annual Meeting, will be well-received.

### Additional Speakers

Starting off the day, the CTPA will hear from Glenn Dreyer, recently retired from the faculty of Connecticut College and now Director Emeritus for the Connecticut College Arboretum. Glenn is well-known to many in the arboricultural community. He is a long-time supporter of the goals of arboriculture. As a member of the Tree Protection Examining Board, he has had a direct role in seeing that arboriculture is properly practiced in the state. He has also been central in promoting the recognition and appreciation of large and historical trees in Connecticut, through his leadership of the Notable Trees Program. Glenn's talk at our meeting will be on "Connecticut Historic and Big Tree Program".

The second speaker in the  
*continued on page 7*



*When dealing with storm damaged trees, how does one decide upon which trees to keep? This will be among the topics Dr. Kevin Smith will speak on during the Annual Meeting.*

*CTPA Winter Meeting, January 17, 2019 - The Aqua Turf Club, Plantsville, CT*

# Updates - How You Can Participate More With the CTPA

## Arborist Law Centennial

As announced in the previous newsletter, CTPA will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Connecticut's Arborist Law by planting a white oak tree in each of the 169 cities and towns in the state. The Association is already working with Planters' Choice Nursery to grow these trees for planting in the fall of 2019. These trees, which are container grown, will be in #3 pots and will likely be on the order of 6-8 feet tall at the time of planting.

It is now time to begin the detailed

planning as to how the distribution and planting of these trees will occur. Key to the effort will be finding arborists and tree care companies to volunteer to work with each city and town to identify a site for planting, secure permission for that planting to occur and then actually lead the planting of that tree. It is also important that the post-planting maintenance of that tree occurs, so that they survive, thrive and become the notable trees of tomorrow.

Early in 2019, the CTPA office will be establishing an on-line means for arborists to sign up and take responsibility for one of the state's cities or towns. It will be OK if we have multiple sign-ups for individual municipalities – it is most important we have all municipalities covered.

Further details will be forthcoming. We will probably designate certain pick-up points around the state, for people to get these trees. There will be a plaque of some sort to go with each tree. Also, CTPA will be coordinating publicity regarding this tree planting.

Stay tuned! It will be great if this is a coordinated, state-wide and association-wide effort to commemorate an important Act of the Legislature that continues to prove its worth to this day.

## CTPA Committees

During the Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting, each CTPA Committee will be providing updates as to what that Committee has been up to. This is a great way to gain insight into the activities

of the CTPA's Board and the Association more broadly. The CTPA Committees are:

- Finance
- Legislation and Enforcement
- Education
- Allied Members
- Public Relations
- UConn Partnership
- Safety
- Meeting Planning
- Climbing Competition
- Arbor Day
- Executive Oversight

In addition to the above Committees, CTPA has liaisons with CT-EC and NEC-ISA and hears monthly reports from the CT Urban Forest Council, the CT Tree Protection Examining Board and the Tree Wardens' Association.

## Upcoming CTPA Workshop

The CTPA Education Committee, led by Dr. Claire Rutledge, is planning a workshop to occur in the first part of this year on the topic of the tree mortality in Connecticut. This workshop will cover the history and current extent of this tree mortality with particular reference to oak and ash trees, how and when trees can be saved, how to safely remove trees that cannot be saved and some potential uses for the wood resulting from these removals.

Please see some initial discussion on these issues in this newsletter. These topics will be presented in greater detail at this workshop, with several of the state's experts participating.

## CONNECTICUT TREE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1946  
Wallingford, CT 06492  
203-484-2512  
fax: 203-793-7824

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*Ribbon Cutting at the Healing Garden Dedication Ceremony*

# 2018 - A Difficult Year for Trees - How Can Arborists Help?

2018 was certainly a difficult year for trees within the State of Connecticut. The storms of March and May, the continued onslaught of the emerald ash borer and then, the combined effects of the drought and the gypsy moth, all together contributed to what the Hartford Courant referred to as the death or damage of “millions of trees”<sup>1</sup> throughout the state.

This major environmental event has drawn of the attention of many, many people across the state. Certainly, the loss of a significant proportion of our forest trees, the drastic reduction in the numbers of a key group of native trees (the ashes) and the likelihood that the death of so many trees in the forest will provide an opportunity for a rapid increase in invasive species are all causes for great concern. There are also other, very near-at-hand concerns that will affect people in their daily lives, whether they pay close attention to what is happening in the forest or not. The woods may not be as safe to enter as previously thought. Foresters need to deal with the impact the extensive tree mortality is having on timber markets. Tree wardens are having critically important discussions about how to handle and how to pay for the removal of many more hazardous trees in our cities and towns. Property owners have to make decisions about the trees they own that are suddenly more at risk than were just a short while ago. For many people, just getting hold of an arborist is a trick in itself, due to the current high demand for tree-related services.

So many pressing questions. Beyond being completely busy, how do arborists fits into this picture? Arborists, of course, have a professional service to offer and people are very interested in taking advantage of these services. That is a good thing and is as it should be.

At the same time, it is always good to ask, as professionals, if there is not more that we can be doing to assist with the response to these many tree concerns? How should we be a part of the overall response? Here are three areas offered for additional consideration:

## **Professional Standards**

Many of the trees affected by the events of the past few years need to be removed. Under Connecticut Law, tree removals do not fall under the arborist license. In fact, with the exception of the professional harvest of forest products, tree removal does not fall under any specific license at all. This means that anyone with a chainsaw and a sense of derring-do can take the task on. Often, in the public perception, that is all it takes to remove a tree. There is no real strength in the argument that having an

arborist license automatically makes someone better at removing trees than someone who is without a license. There are many good, professional tree removers who are top-notch in terms of skill, safety, knowledge and experience. At the same time, arboriculture is a profession that is dedicated to doing things related to trees and tree care in the right way, with clearly defined standards that are continually tested and improved over time.

Adherence to these standards, as relates to safety and respect for trees and property, is just as important for those who do not have an arborist license as it is for those who do. The responsibility for being safe is not something that belongs exclusively to the professional logger or the professional arborist – that is a message that we should be sending loudly and clearly. Unlicensed and uncertified individuals should be held to the same standards regarding tree removals. They should know and respect the right way of doing things and they should carry full insurance, to protect themselves, their workers and their clients. Also, they should respect the limits of their responsibilities. They should not be recommending the removal of trees for health or safety reasons when the condition of that tree is not certain.

In addition, there are certain situations in tree removal that demand the specific skills most often associated with a well-trained and experienced arborist. These include the removal of trees around structures and those trees that are in close proximity to electrical wires. These are not jobs for the recklessly heroic chainsaw owner.

The bottom line is that, when having trees removed, the public should be encouraged to look for people who are skilled, work safely and have the knowledge and experience needed for the job. While the law in Connecticut does not require that an individual be licensed and insured in order to remove trees, hiring a licensed arborist makes sense in most cases. With a licensed arborist the property owner is at least guaranteed that the individual hired has knowledge of the basic, important principles. Despite how busy arborists are currently, the message should still be, it is not wise to cut corners on any of the basic concerns regarding skill, safety, knowledge and experience. Doing so only places the property owner, the person doing the work, any of his or her employees and perhaps others, at greater risk.

## **Wood Utilization**

When the Hartford Courant speaks of “millions of trees” dead or damaged, this naturally raises the question as to whether this is an exaggeration on the part of the newspaper. One way to look at it is, if Connecticut’s 169 cities and towns each has on average between 100 and 1,000 street trees to be removed, then this is somewhere

*continued on page 5*

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<sup>1</sup> "Millions Of Connecticut Trees Have Been Killed Or Damaged In Recent Years. Taking Them Down Is Expensive." By Gregory B. Hladky, Hartford Courant, September 18, 2018, online at: <https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-eversource-dead-trees-20180924-story.html>

# A Thumbnail Sketch of Tree Mortality Across Connecticut

These tables show the percentage, by county and by genera, of the total number of trees identified by DEEP for removal across Connecticut. The percentage of each county's contribution to the overall state total is also listed.

<b>Litchfield County</b> <i>(21% of state tree total)</i>		<b>Hartford County</b> <i>(12% of state tree total)</i>		<b>Tolland County</b> <i>(10% of state tree total)</i>		<b>Windham County</b> <i>(12% of state tree total)</i>	
<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>	<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>	<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>	<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>
Ash	31%	Ash	39%	Ash	22%	Ash	22%
Birch	4%	Birch	5%	Birch	3%	Birch	1%
Hemlock	9%	Hemlock	11%	Hemlock	3%	Hemlock	0%
Hickory	0%	Hickory	1%	Hickory	1%	Hickory	1%
Maple	14%	Maple	6%	Maple	5%	Maple	5%
Oak	9%	Oak	10%	Oak	58%	Oak	65%
Pine	16%	Pine	8%	Pine	5%	Pine	4%
Other	15%	Other	14%	Other	2%	Other	1%
Unknown	2%	Unknown	5%	Unknown	0%	Unknown	1%

<b>Fairfield County</b> <i>(2% of state tree total)</i>		<b>New Haven County</b> <i>(9% of state tree total)</i>		<b>Middlesex County</b> <i>(10% of state tree total)</i>		<b>New London County</b> <i>(23% of state tree total)</i>	
<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>	<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>	<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>	<u>Genus</u>	<u>% County Total</u>
Ash	40%	Ash	89%	Ash	18%	Ash	4%
Birch	3%	Birch	1%	Birch	8%	Birch	2%
Hemlock	14%	Hemlock	1%	Hemlock	3%	Hemlock	2%
Hickory	0%	Hickory	0%	Hickory	1%	Hickory	1%
Maple	10%	Maple	2%	Maple	7%	Maple	3%
Oak	5%	Oak	3%	Oak	55%	Oak	74%
Pine	8%	Pine	1%	Pine	2%	Pine	9%
Other	12%	Other	2%	Other	5%	Other	3%
Unknown	7%	Unknown	1%	Unknown	1%	Unknown	2%

The above tables are intended to show the variation in tree mortality by county, across the state of Connecticut. The data used to create these tables were gathered by the staff of Connecticut's DEEP. This was done as part of the agency's effort to respond effectively to the current wave of tree mortality sweeping the state. The data on individual trees were collected by the staff visiting high use areas within DEEP properties, such as picnic areas and camp sites, and identifying trees that needed to be removed. This data, and so these tables, are not intended to serve as a scientific survey of this mortality. However, to the extent that these high use areas can be considered as representative of the forest within each county, these numbers can be seen as providing something of a useful snapshot of the types of trees that are dying and where this is occurring, at a county level.

It is interesting to note that the two counties that have the highest percentage contribution to the statewide total of tree mortality are those in opposite corners of the state – Litchfield County in the northwest and New London County in the southeast. While these high percentages may be as much about the extent of DEEP properties in these counties as they are about the local concentrations of tree mortality, the variation in the numbers underscores that there are differences as to what is going in each of these counties. It is known that New London County suffered heavily from the combination of the drought and the gypsy moth. The gypsy moth was not a significant factor in Litchfield County, although the drought was. Litchfield County shows significant ash mortality due to the much greater presence of emerald ash borer in that part of the state. Both counties suggest that there are developing concerns with the pine species.

With respect to ash tree mortality, the statistical situation in New Haven County just jumps out. In that county, nearly 90% of the trees found by the DEEP staff that need to be removed are ash trees.

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## How Can Arborists Help? (continued)

between 16,900 trees and 169,000 trees statewide. Since we are likely closer to the high end, a rough estimate of at least 100,000 street trees that need to be removed seems reasonable. Of course, that does not include all of the park trees, private trees and forest trees that have died over the past couple of years. When these additional trees are added to the total, the Hartford Courant number does not at all appear to be an exaggeration.

Another question to be asked of all of these dead trees is, what is to be done with all of this wood? Often, for arborists, wood disposal is just another logistical step in tree work and another expense to be factored into the cost of a job. There is awareness that this wood could be considered as a useful resource. However, for most arborists, the hurdles of developing a successful market for products from yard waste are too high for anything beyond tangential interest in the subject.

Maybe all of that changes, due to the volume of yard, park and street trees that need to be removed. Perhaps, too, things change due to the disruption that these events are causing in the traditional wood markets in Connecticut. Standing dead trees do not often make for valuable timber, due to staining and other characteristics that reduce the desirability of logs from these trees at the sawmill. But now, there are so many dead trees that have to go somewhere and so many fewer live trees ready for harvest. That might change the sawmilling calculation.

At the same time, on an unrelated front, overseas trade in prime veneer logs has been affected by the current uncertainty in foreign trade policy. It is fair to say that the markets for wood in the state are not now what they were even just a couple of years ago.

There is no certainty that any of this will lead to greater use of the wood produced in tree care operations. However, it may be worth reviewing the four major types of wood products, apart from firewood, that might come from tree care operations:

1. Veneer logs. These are the top of the woodpile, so to speak, with regards to wood value. High quality Connecticut hardwood logs, especially oak logs, have been in great demand in recent years, particularly for such foreign buyers as furniture manufacturers in China. Veneer logs must meet exacting requirements, in terms of the quality of the wood and also such features as the length of a log. Cutting a veneer log short of 8 feet, even by just a few inches, can destroy the value in that log.
2. Lumber. Sawmills produce a wide range of solid sawn wood products from Connecticut logs. This includes such high value products as flooring and paneling and lower value but still necessary products such as pallet wood. Connecticut boasts of a few large and several smaller sawmills. The

lumber value of a log is, again, a function of its characteristics, including its dimensions. A log that is cut too short or otherwise mishandled from the sawmill's perspective might end up with no or minimal lumber value.

3. Clean chips. Wood chips from Connecticut have received a great deal of interest lately, for a wide range of products, from being a source of wood fiber for paper to playground surfacing and as the basis of high-end landscape mulch. The term 'clean chips' usually refers to chips that come from the trunks (boles) of trees that have been debarked and which contain little if any decay. Chips are often separated by species or at least generic classes (e.g. hardwood chips versus softwood chips). The advantages of using clean chips is the uniformity of its properties, such as of the wood fibers when used for paper or the ability to accept dye when used for mulch.
4. Chipper mulch. This is a term coined by Alex Shigo. Others might tend to call this type of material 'biomass'. The reference is to the chipped up remnants of trunks, leaves and branches, usually without much discrimination as to the mixture. The advantages of this material comes from the fact that there is often a high ratio of living material (e.g. cambium, buds and leaves) to non-living wood and bark in the mixture. This feature makes chipper mulch highly useful as a soil amendment and also as a material than can be further matured into good quality landscape mulch and, eventually, compost.

Both clean chips and chipper mulch also have potential value as a fuel for use in the generation of electricity or for meeting local heating needs, such as the heating of greenhouses. There is already some demand for this, although the emergence of natural gas as a primary heating fuel has slowed the development of this market. Arborists may want to stay tuned regarding developments on these fronts. The DEEP Forestry Wood Utilization program and the UConn Cooperative Extension program are good resources for keeping up with changes in these areas. There will also be a CTPA workshop in the spring.

### Predicting the Future

We probably all wish that we were better able to predict the future. However, when it comes to trees and tree health, few groups have better insight and knowledge on this topic than arborists. This comes both from the day to day observations of trees and from having the professional and scientific background to interpret what is being seen. With trees now being such a topic of concern, there is only going to be an increasing need for the sort of understanding that arborists are able to provide.

*continued on page 6*

## How Can Arborists Help? (continued)

This is especially true with regards to topics such as gypsy moth, drought, damaged trees and the emerald ash borer.

With respect to EAB, the predictions of the scientists have been very good. They described in advance the spread of this insect and the 'killing wave' that would follow. They told of how local populations of EAB would rise to a peak and then collapse due to the loss of ash trees as a food source.

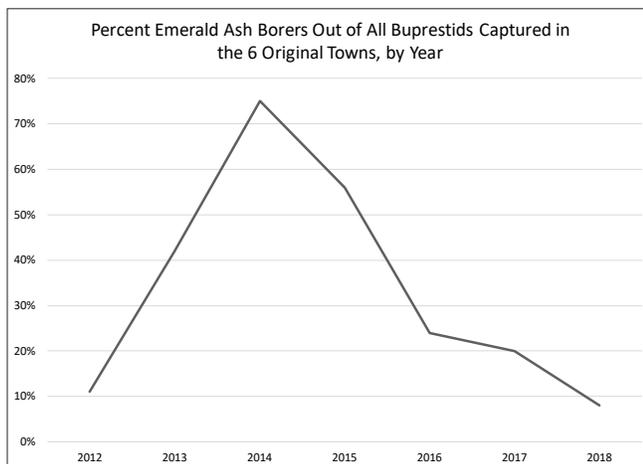
Arborists, particularly those with long years of experience, also have a great deal of knowledge with regards to gypsy moths. The extensive outbreaks of the 1970's and 80's were of such a magnitude that they left a deep impression on anyone working with trees at the time. There are still many tree care professionals around from those days. Their recollections, including of gypsy moth cycles and what occurred in the wake of major gypsy moth outbreaks, are just as relevant now as they were then. It is worth recalling the surge in the number of two lined chestnut borer outbreaks and the number of trees that succumbed to armillaria root rot following these outbreaks. Likewise, recollections of past droughts and how these affected individual tree species are welcome in the conversation.

Predicting the future should go beyond making

recommendations as to how to deal with present problems. With the loss of so many trees, our urban and rural forests will need to be reshaped. In cities and towns and on client's properties, this means selecting and planting the trees that will become part of people's lives for years to come. Arborists can help in creating this future by contributing our understanding of trees, tree needs and what people tend to want in trees. Our views on how trees will be affected in the future by changes in climate, tree pests and other problems, land use and development and many other factors, are all important and can be applied in helping society at large to create a better world for future generations to inherit.

To borrow from an insight that Tom Worthley of the University of Connecticut expresses well, most of us tend to think that, while we are dedicated and competent in what we are doing, we are just doing our jobs, the same as everyone else. Most people take their work seriously and try to do their best. What we often forget is that, because of our work, we are different in a key respect: we know a great deal about trees. This gives us something to offer in a way that most others cannot. We should remember that, and be prepared to offer what we can, especially when it helps people see trees as they connect to the big picture. This is something that could be of benefit to everyone.

### Data on EAB Captures Since 2012



This chart is based on data provided by Dr. Claire Rutledge of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station. Since 2012, Claire has worked with a group of volunteer 'wasp watchers', collecting buprestid beetles captured by the *Cerceris* wasp. The wasp uses these beetles as food for its young. The emerald ash borer is one of the beetles sought out by this wasp. These captures can be used to assess the relative size of the local EAB population. This chart shows the per cent EAB captured in the 6 towns in which EAB was first found in CT. These 6 towns are Prospect, Naugatuck, Waterbury, Wolcott, Bethany and Beacon Falls.

### CTPA Helps Provide Outreach on EAB



Since EAB was first found in Connecticut, CTPA has worked to ensure that arborists, tree wardens, town officials, home owners and others are aware of the damage that this insect can do. A primary means for getting this message out has been a series of hands-on workshops, conducted by CTPA, CAES and DEEP jointly, that gave participants the opportunity to see the insect and its damage up close and in person. These workshops were moved around the state so that people in all sections of the state would have the opportunity to see what was coming for our ash trees, and still is in store for some parts of the state.

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## CTPA Annual Meeting (continued)

morning will be Allan Fenner. Allan is a consulting arborist with SavATree. He is also a member of the CTPA Board of Directors. In his career, Allan has seen arboriculture and trees from a variety of perspectives – including as a field ‘tree guy’, as a commercial arborist and now as a consultant. These various perspectives provide the basis of his talk on “Construction and Trees -What Works and What Doesn’t”. Allan will include in his talk local examples and references to the challenging conditions that have made his job both a test and an opportunity for success.

### Other Activities

There will be other special events that will occur throughout the day. Early on, during the Business Meeting, the CTPA Board will provide a welcome to UMass’s Kristina Bezanson, Lecturer in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry in the Department of Environmental Conservation, College of Natural Resources in Amherst. Kristina has accepted the challenge of following in the footsteps of the now-retired Dennis Ryan.

Later in the morning, just before lunch, look for an announcement from the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR). This announcement will be made by Tom Worthley on behalf of Dr. Jason Vokoun, Head of the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. The Department is within CAHNR.

The Annual Meeting is also the occasion on which CTPA presents its awards to worthy individuals. The first

awards will be presented to two deserving young people selected as recipients of the CTPA Arborist Scholarship. They are Ashley Martone of Branford, currently enrolled at the University of Maine and Erin Reilly of Naugatuck, now at Paul Smith’s College.

This Scholarship is a \$2,000 award to individuals who are in a college program that leads to a degree in arboriculture, urban forestry or a related field. Recipients must be residents of Connecticut and have an expressed intention in making a career in trees. This year, CTPA received several good applications. For that reason, the Board chose to award two scholarships this year. The Board sees having this much choice as testimony to the quality of the applicants and to the degree of interest among young people in careers relating to trees and tree care.

The second set of awards are to individuals who, through their work, have proven their dedication to advancing the care of trees in Connecticut. There are two awards within this grouping. The first is the Arborist Citation, presented to an individual who is not a member of CTPA but who has nonetheless contributed to advancing the care of trees in the state. The second is the Award of Merit, presented to an individual who is a member of CTPA and who has made a significant contribution towards advancing the care of trees.

Of course, the CTPA Annual Meeting is never just the sum of its parts – there is always something beyond the agenda that makes it even more worthwhile. One

*continued on page 8*

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## Veterans Home and Hospital Healing Garden Dedicated



ensure that this project succeeded. Please see the Update Section of the CTPA web site to learn more about the contributors and how this project came about. The honor of cutting the ribbon at the dedication was given to two of the veterans along with Sandy Ingellis, DVA Commissioner Thomas Saadi, Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman and Bud Neal.

On August 3, 2018, CTPA participated in the dedication of the Healing Garden at the Veterans Home and Hospital in Rocky Hill. Creating this garden was an all-out effort by CTPA that involved contributions from many members of the Association, businesses, numerous donors and various volunteers who dedicated their time, sweat and passion to



## CTPA Annual Meeting - January 17th (continued)

of those extras is the great service that the Aqua Turf provides. Plus, there is the fantastic opportunity for conversations with friends and colleagues. It is good to be a part of the heart and soul of tree care within the state of Connecticut.

For many people, the trade show is a 'must do' at every Meeting. Once again, CTPA will have sold out trade show booth space. The exhibit room will be full of the latest for everyone – from the newest ideas and equipment to access to the advice and knowledge of those who work with our profession. This list includes the scientists at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station and the representatives of the various trade associations, such as New England ISA and the Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut.

Attendees will have the opportunity to earn ceu's, including 4.25 credits towards renewal of the CT Arborist License and 3.75 credits towards the ISA Arborist Certification. Also, CT Forest Practitioners will be able to earn 2.0 credits, and Tree Wardens 4.25 ceu's.

Advanced registration wraps up on January 10<sup>th</sup>, with walk-in registration welcomed on the day of. For registration details, visit the CTPA website at [www.CTPA.org](http://www.CTPA.org).



*Heather Leff, Executive Director of the New England Chapter of the ISA, points out what a certified professional arborist can do when she puts her mind to it. Heather will be one of the approximately 50 exhibitors at the CTPA Annual Meeting who will be there to talk with attendees about products, techniques, equipment, the latest news, upcoming educational opportunities or just about anything else that is of current interest to those involved in tree care in the state and region.*

*Late registrants are welcome as walk-ins on the day of the Meeting.*

*To all who work with trees in CT: a happy, safe and prosperous New Year!*

CTPA  
PO Box 1946  
Wallingford, Connecticut 06492

