

NHLA

NEWSletter

Vol. 39 No. 3

Informing and educating members of the Green Industry

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NHLA Safety Day, March 29

by Mike Barwell, NHLA Education Coordinator

Hurry up! Time is running out. Register by March 22 for the March 29 NHLA Safety Day at North Point Outdoors in Derry.

This event builds on the success of last year's Safety Day and includes two very important workshops. The first is a Job Site First Responder class that every landscaper must attend. Two experienced first responders will lead this First Aid work-

shop: Ed Gannon, retired Derry firefighter/paramedic; and Bob Taylor, Windham firefighter/EMT. It is a two-hour introductory workshop and will cover care for injured workers with cuts, burns, heat stress, or other worksite injuries. Attendees will receive a First Aid Kit courtesy of **Cross Insurance**.

Troop G of the NH Department of Safety returns for a class on vehicle safety and compliance.

Last year's session drew 120-plus attendees as three Troopers inspected trucks, trailers and large equipment for Federal and State vehicle compliance. As Troop G steps up its statewide roadside inspections again this year you'll want to be prepared.

"Every landscaper should attend this workshop for vehicle compliance because regulations change all the time," said David

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The *NHLA Newsletter* is published by the New Hampshire Landscape Association for its members, free of charge, 10 times a year.

Memberships:
 See enclosed application or the website for a membership application.

Additional Subscriptions: Firms desiring additional subscriptions, can purchase them at \$40.00 each. Contact Pamela Moreau.

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The *NHLA Newsletter* seeks to encourage a lively discussion of topics of concern to NHLA members. Opinions and proposals presented in the newsletter are those of the writers to whom they are attributed and are not a statement of official policy by NHLA, unless so stated.

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President's Notes

By David DeJohn, NHCLP

Well, here I am once again at this point I've been to twice before, writing my last President's Notes for the *Newsletter*. As the restrictions of the pandemic fade further into the past and our ability to return to a more normal way of doing things becomes greater, I can't thank the Board of NHLA enough for staying strong and focused on moving NHLA forward. I'm proud of what we have accomplished over the last couple of years and look forward to seeing where the next year, with new leadership and new, younger board members takes us.

This Association has been around now for forty or so years, and its primary mission remains the same to this day — to educate our members and help them maintain the highest standards of

the landscape industry. 40 years is a long time though, and it's easy over that period of time to resist change and to break old habits. Over the last few years, however, "we've never done it that way before" has given way to "we should try that," and that sentiment is only getting stronger among this most current Board members.

In 2022 and again at the beginning of this new year, and with the help of Mike Barwell and Annette Zamarchi, we've held two Board Retreats that have helped us to look at where NHLA has been, who we are, and where we would like to go. It's helped us look at the accomplishments over these many years and the challenges ahead. We've started to map out goals that include attracting new members and

We've started to map out goals that include attracting new members and keeping current ones, creating more value to being a member, looking at new ways to communicate with you, and of course our primary objective, which is to educate and update you on the industry.

keeping current ones, creating more value to being a member of NHLA, looking at new ways to communicate with you through various platforms, and of course our primary objective, which is to educate and update you on the industry. On that front we have almost a full calendar of events for the year planned or in the planning stages so it's going to be a busy year.

So, again, I'd like to thank everyone on the Board, our committee leaders, and our business manager for all your time and hard work. As a volunteer organization I know it's not always easy to give your time to NHLA in between work and family and everything else, but you have really risen to the occasion, especially in this last year,

and for that I am very grateful. Thank you.

And thank you to Landcare Associates for hosting the CPR certification course held in Epping earlier this month. It was a great course run by Eric Pike from McGregor Memorial EMS. I think we all came away feeling a little more confidence in being able to help someone if necessary. Thanks again.

Hopefully as this issue of the *Newsletter* comes out we will be gearing up for or maybe already out working on spring cleanups and getting projects started. I hope you have a great and successful 2023 season, and I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Safety Day and all of our other planned events!

Happy Spring! 🌱



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Second NHLA Safety Day: Register by March 22

Continued from p. 1

DeJohn, NHLA president. “We all need to know how to take care of ourselves and our co-workers and know the signs of heat stress, dehydration, and injuries. We are the ones on the scene before first responders arrive on site. This could save a life.”

Prevent a ticket, maybe save a life. It’s worth the time and effort to be there.

Safety Day begins with registration at 8:30 am and a breakfast sponsored by **Central NH Trailers** at North Point, 22 Ashleigh Drive, Derry.

The first session begins at 9:30 am, with free lunch sponsored by **Site One** from 11:30 am-12:30 pm.

The second session runs from 12:30-2:30 pm, followed by a brief wrap up from NHLA leadership ending at 3 pm.

Cost for the workshops is \$50 for NHLA members and \$65 for non-members – however, non-members can get the discount rate by joining and paying their annual fee of \$150 at registration. Preregistration is required. No walk-in registrations the day of the event.

In case of snow or weather cancellation, the workshop will be moved to Friday, March 31.

Registration at nhlaonline.org/spring-activities/



Safety Day 2022, Photo by Kate Nowakowski

“Every landscaper should attend this workshop for vehicle compliance because regulations change all the time.”

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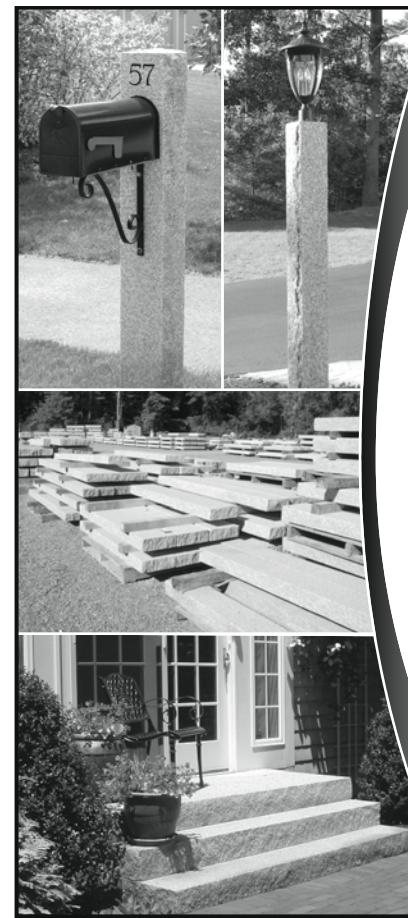
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2023 NHLA Scholarship Recipients

by David DeJohn, NHCLP, NHLA president

At the bottom of every NHLA renewal form is a section that allows members to add a little extra towards a scholarship fund. This fund goes towards a deserving student, or students, looking to educate themselves and start a career in some aspect of the horticultural and landscaping industry. This year, thanks to you and your generosity, we have awarded three students \$1000.00 each to help with their expenses. These three recipients — a student working towards becoming a landscape architect, a former graphic designer, and an art history major and educator — were drawn to careers in the landscape industry as they they've seen the effects of climate change, urban sprawl, and the loss of connection with the natural world.

As an art history major Emily Karmen is now using her artistic talents in the landscape design certification program at NHTI. With experience in conservation and environmental issues, as well as having received her master's degree in education, Emily has a strong desire "to educate people and instill in them a wonder for nature." Connecting children with nature, conservation and protecting wild places, and designing and creating natural spaces in urban settings are just some of the possibilities in Emily's future. Emily graduates from NHTI in 2024.

For Minnie Uhm, a current student at Cornell University and studying to be a landscape architect, it was an early interest in art and the environment that led to pursuing his desired career. Once in college and seeing the possibilities that art and architecture have to address climate change, social justice, and food sovereignty he knew he had made the right choice. Minnie looks forward to gaining a better understanding of landscapes within the "built and political environment" and how landscape design can inspire environmental stewardship. Minnie graduates from Cornell in 2025.

Taking her experience as a graphics and user experience designer Janelle Maynard is now enrolled at NHTI and looks forward to "creating sustainable and low maintenance public spaces" that can be used for outdoor markets, fairs, and fundraising events as well public food and sensory gardens. At NHTI Janelle is learning about the importance of native plants, proper site planning, and ecological design solutions to improve the environment and to make neighborhoods more resilient. Janelle graduates from NHTI in 2024.

These three students are committed to making a difference in the landscape industry, and your generous donations to the Scholarship Fund helps to make that possible, so thank you again to everyone who donated. You are helping to bring in the next generation of landscape designers, landscape architects and plant growers. If these three are any indication then the industry will be in good hands. We look forward to seeing Emily, Minnie, and Janelle at future NHLA events! 🍀

Thank You to the Donors to Our NHLA Scholarship Fund!

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Total Donations: \$3,065

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- Andrew Pelkey, North Point Outdoors
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DIRECTORS: (Vote for one) *one year term*

- Donnie Piccirillo, Pierson Nurseries
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VICE PRESIDENT: (Vote for one) *one year term*

- Heather Linehan, Linehan Landscape & Property
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Staying on the Board

Past-President:

Dave DeJohn, DeJohn Landscaping '24

Directors:

John Crooks, John's Landscaping of Madbury '25

Cori Cahow, Organic Garden Girl '24

SEC/TREAS: (Vote for one) *one year term*

- Maria Rainey, Nature's Design
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Signature _____ Company _____

All ballots must be signed to be counted. Return by March 15 by mail to NHLA Business Manager, 13 Rancourt St., Nashua, NH 03064 OR scan and email to nhla@comcast.net You may also opt to vote online instead. Online voting will open on March 1.



Ornamental Grasses for Water Conservation in the Landscape

by Jennifer Kujawski, UMass Extension

Proper plant selection can reduce water use and protect water quality, and ornamental grasses are an important part of the landscape professional's plant palette. Grasses add unique textures and patterns to the landscape, often year-round, with few fertilizer and pesticide applications. Once established, many grasses need little supplemental irrigation and can develop extensive root systems that allow them to withstand periods of drought.

actively growing: cool season and warm season. Cool season grasses tend to perform best at temperatures between near freezing to 75 degrees Fahrenheit. They will be vibrantly green in

spring, and put out flowers and seedheads in late spring to early summer. During the heat of the summer, cool season grasses may turn brown and be mistaken for dead, but once temperatures

drop again in early fall, active growth will resume. Warm season grasses, conversely, are dormant all winter and begin to green up in late spring. They thrive in the hot, often dry conditions of midsummer and will flower and go to seed in late summer to fall.



Ornamental Grass Establishment & Maintenance

Spring planting is appropriate for most ornamental grasses, although cool season grasses may also be planted in early fall. Specimen plantings are best established with container-grown or field-dug plants, while large area plantings and grassy groundcovers can be more economically planted

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Cool Season and Warm Season Grasses

Grasses can be roughly divided into two types based on the time of year they are most

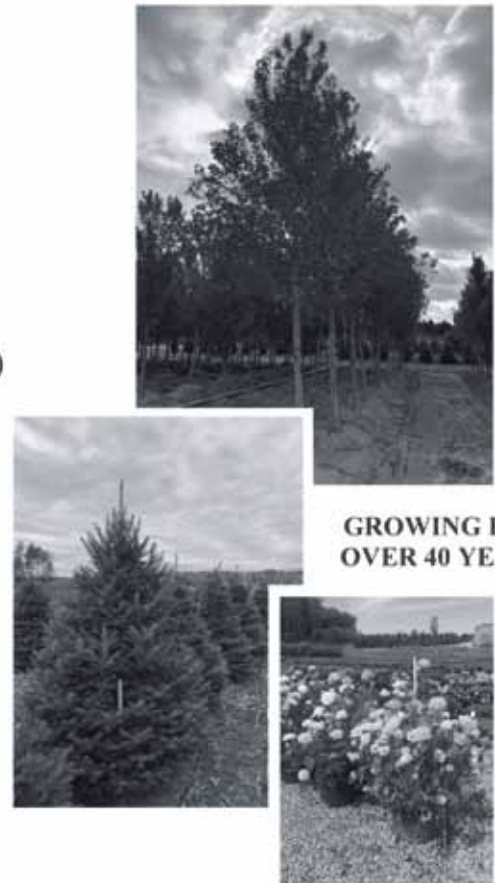


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Slab Mania

by Bill Gardocki; article reprinted with permission from Hardscape Magazine

Technically, what is a slab? According to ICPI [ICPI Concrete Paver Installer Course book, 8th Edition, pg. 90], “slabs generally have an aspect ratio greater than 4:1, a minimum thickness of 2” and a size larger than 10” x 10.” As contractors we must remember that paving slabs perform differently than regular pavers.

The aspect ratio is extremely important in selecting the right paver/slab for your job. Aspect ratio measures the unit length to its thickness. When this ratio exceeds 4:1 the units generally cannot be used for vehicular applications. I have seen projects where contractors used slabs that were a combination of 6” x 12”, 12” x 12”, and 12” x 18” x 2 3/8” thick, and observed how many of the pieces’ cracked during compaction in to the bedding sand, or cracked from the loads they

When installed correctly, paving slabs offer an opportunity for increased production rates.

were required to carry. When I teach the NCMA Level 1 Certification class I say repeatedly that you don’t want to ask the wall block that you are using to do something it was not designed to do. The same can now be said about paving slabs. Don’t install them in applications where the loads are too great for the product.

ICPI is currently performing tests on slabs and working with manufacturers to help establish



industry specifications for slabs. As of right now, manufacturers have few specifications to meet on the manufacturing end. With pavers, manufacturers must meet specific psi tolerances, water absorption rates, and material deterioration specifications. Slabs do not have any of these specifications to meet at this time.

When installed correctly, paving slabs offer an opportunity for increased production rates. We do all of our slab installation with our Pave Mor suction tools. The tools not only speed up production but save knees, backs, and fingers. We use the one-man tool for smaller slabs 50lbs and under, and the two-man tool for larger slabs. Our patio production rate is about 275sqft per hour for three men. The important thing is that that rate stays the same all day, day after day, because we are not fatiguing ourselves by installing by hand. Most of my patios average about 500sqft. My two-man prep crew will take about 5 hours to excavate, infill, compact, and level a 500sqft area.

Then the install crew will take about 45 minutes to level screed pipes, and install our bedding sand. I estimate two hours of laying pavers, one to two hours of cutting depending upon the curves, circle packs, etc., one hour to install edge restraint and sweep in the polysand, and one hour of loaming and seeding the disturbed areas. Including travel time, set up, and clean up, I estimate about 40 man hours on a 500sqft slab patio install. For the same size patio installing Hollandstone pavers I would figure 46 man hours.

Using slabs, the embedment compaction process can be tricky. Many manufacturers say not to use a vibratory plate compactor when embedding slabs in to the bedding sand. We use the Weber VPR700 Roller Compactor to do all of our embedment of slabs and pavers. There are no worries about cracking, scuffing, or chipping the slabs when using this roller compactor. It is also extremely important to vibrate the polysand in to the joints of the

Be diligent in your paver slab selection process, install efficiently, use the proper tools, install all the components that make our system strong and long lasting.

slabs. Phil Graves, Techniseal’s Director of U.S. Sales, told me that “studies have shown that with compaction on the surface of pavers and slabs you get 12% more sand in to the joint. This not only helps with vertical interlock, but also results in a 20% increase in the strength of the polysand.” This is important for the long term viability of the system; that all components be as strong as possible.

Be diligent in your paver slab selection process, install efficiently, use the proper tools, install all the components that make our system strong and long lasting. As Phil Graves says, “the customer wants the best finished result possible. Using the best materials, tools, and processes is the easiest way to guarantee the best finished product and safeguard against costly call backs. It’s a very easy recipe for successful installation.”

— Bill Gardocki is past president of NHLA (1994 & 1995). He is now a Hardscape Educator.

Don't Forget the Trees! Benefits of Tree Fertilization

When you think about fertilization, the first thing that comes to mind is probably your clients' lawns or a garden bed, but it's important not to forget that other plants in the landscape can benefit from regular fertilization as well, like trees and shrubs.

Do Trees Really Need Fertilizer?

Trees' needs can often be overlooked by clients unless it is visually declining. While some

clients understand the value of tree fertilization, others may need to be educated on the benefits it can provide.

When trees are planted, people often forget that they need food and nutrients as well. Oftentimes available nutrients aren't there such as in the soils on a newer build. At older sites nutrients may have dissipated throughout the soil and need to be reestablished.

Fertilizers can be thought of as vitamins, and without them a

Aside from promoting tree growth, fertilization can provide needed nutrients to a tree that's declining and extend its life.



tree's growth can be limited. Aside from promoting tree growth, fertilization can provide needed nutrients to a tree that's declining and extend its life.

Customers who value the trees on their property will be open to the benefits and reasons why fertilizing can be important. But expectations must be managed. Some owners may think one round

of fertilization will magically make their trees bounce back. Inform them that they may see improvements in the first season, but for some trees, it may take several seasons to really see changes.

Not all trees will need fertilizer. Assess your clients needs. Structural pruning is another

Continued on p. 23

NHLA Paver & Block Wall Installation Workshop

by Mike Barwell, NHLA Education Coordinator

Register now for NHLA's fast-paced, four-hour seminar designed for contractors and sales reps who want to increase their skills in technical specifications in paver and block wall planning and installation. Instructor Bill Gardocki will lead the two-part seminar, which condenses five courses of a basic understanding of Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute (ICPI) and National Concrete Manufacturers Association (NCMA) specifications.

The May 6 workshop is designed for attendees who are not pursuing the certification process or for those who hold certification and want continuing education credits or a refresher on ICPI and NCMA specifications. Included is a condensed version of five certification courses. ICPI Level 1, ICPI Advanced Residen-

tial, PICP, NCMA Level 1 and NCMA Advanced Residential.

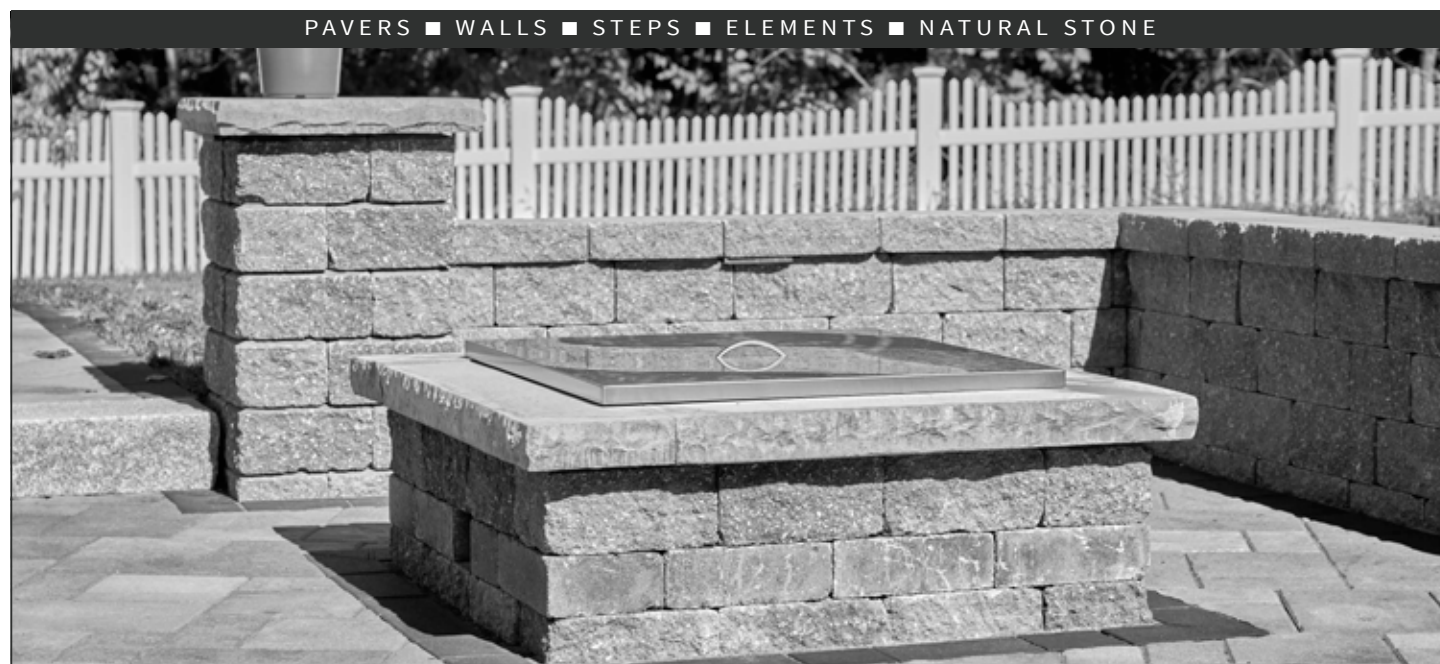
This seminar will help your sales team speak technical specifications and the contractor language. Milton CAT at 30 Industrial Drive in Londonderry is the host and sponsor of this event. Registration starts at 7:15 am, with coffee and donuts. Class will run from 8 am to noon.

Attendees are invited to tour Milton CAT's facility after the workshop. Please let us know if you want the tour. CEUs are available for NHCLP (NH Certified Landscape Professional), ICPI, and NCMA.

The workshop is limited to 50, so register early on the NHLA website. For questions, contact Mike Barwell, NHLA Education Coordinator, at mikebarwell@yahoo.com.



From left: Mike Courchaine, paving industry sales manager at Milton Cat in Londonderry; Bill Gardocki, past NHLA president and educator; and David DeJohn, NHLA president



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The New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station is excited to welcome NHLA members to the Macfarlane Research Greenhouses at UNH for its 2023 Open House on Saturday, April 1, 9-3 p.m. It will be a full day of talks and presentations by NHAES researchers and Extension specialists. Learn about active research projects at the greenhouses and how the science benefits New Hampshire. Meet the greenhouse staff and enjoy lunch offered by the UNH Food Repurposing Project in collaboration with Gather.

Learn About Macfarlane Research & Researchers

When: April 1, 2023, 9 am - 3 pm

Where: Macfarlane Research Greenhouses, 13 Botanical Ln., Durham, NH 03824

What: Meet NHAES researchers, learn about current research projects, and discover something new for any age!

More info: colsa.unh.edu/new-hampshire-agricultural-experiment-station/news-events/2023-macfarlane-research-greenhouses-open-house

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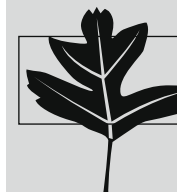
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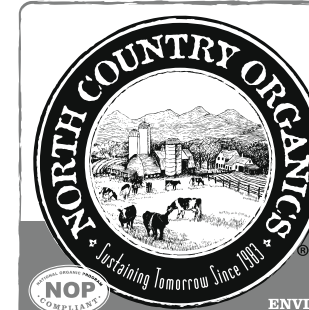
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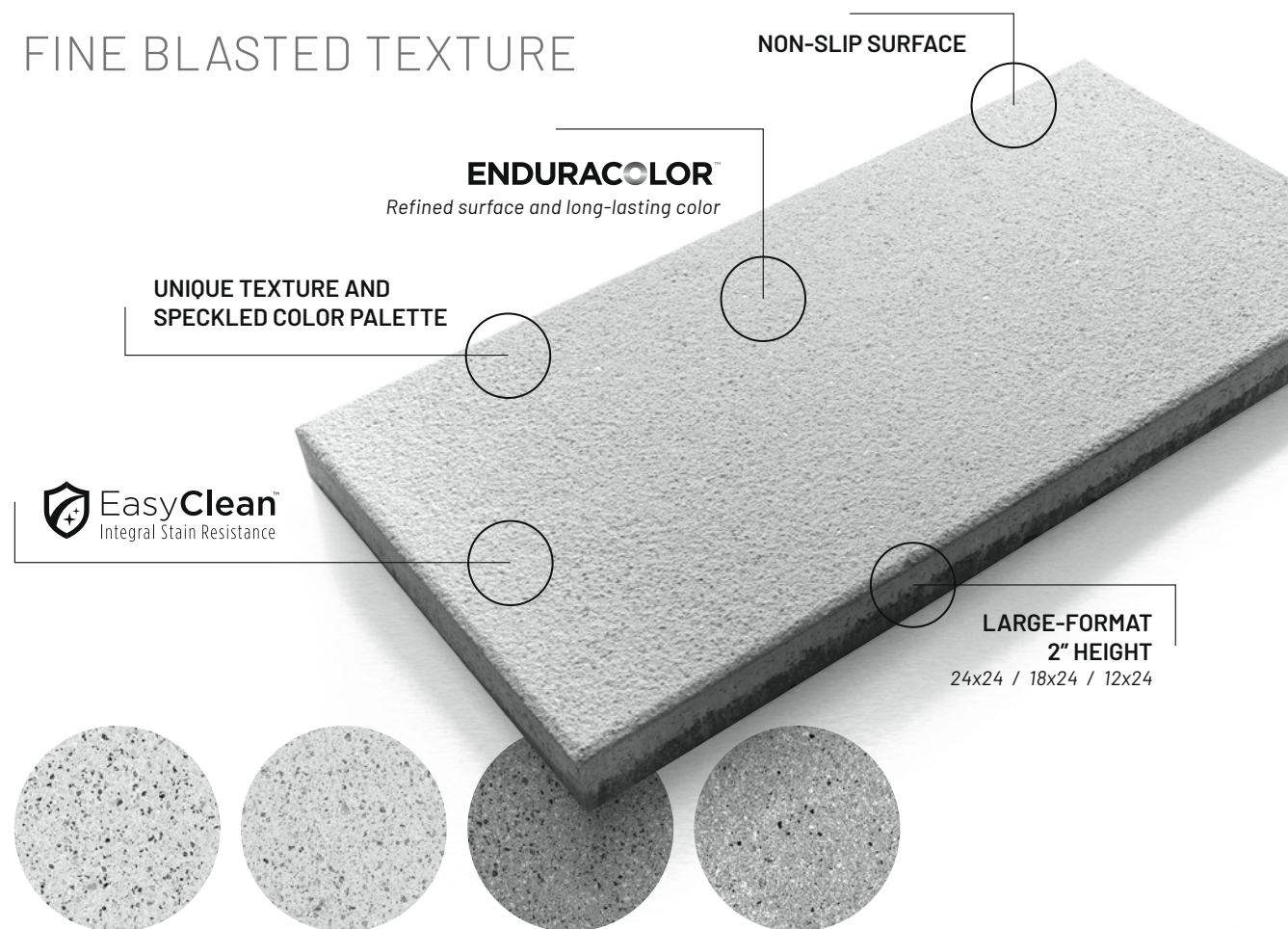
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Inspection of Storm Damaged Trees

by H. Dennis P. Ryan and Brian Kane, UMass Extension

Wind, snow and ice events can be rough on trees. Following significant events it is very important to inspect your clients' trees, especially those that are weak-wooded or have a tendency to grow poor branch attachments. For starters, make sure a qualified arborist does the inspections. If you don't have a qualified arborist on staff, then hire a consulting arborist to help [You can find certified arborists on the NH Arborist Association website, nharborists.org.] Make sure your arborist also has sufficient experience with tree failures and inspections.

Inspection process for storm damaged areas

Start by assessing that area on the property that is used most

often. Remember to always inspect trees in a systematic fashion. An evaluator must inspect each part of the tree: crown, stem, and roots; and the tree should be viewed from all sides. The inspector should proceed in the same manner each time, to achieve a pattern of investigation that will help make comparisons to other trees and defects.

In the crown, the inspector looks for problems with the branches. These can come in the form of dead, broken, hanging, cracked or branches with significant decay and cavities. It is recommended that a threshold for defective branch size be established, generally around two inches in diameter. Smaller defective branches may be pres-

Remember to always inspect trees in a systematic fashion. An evaluator must inspect each part of the tree: crown, stem, and roots; and the tree should be viewed from all sides.

ent, but do not present a hazard risk because of their small size.

Weak branch attachments are also a common defect in trees. Weak branch attachments can be found not only between the stem and a lateral branch, but also between co-dominant leaders. Because tight, "V-shaped" attachments with included bark have little sound wood holding the branches together, they are more likely to fail when subjected to wind, ice, or snow loads. In

fact, as the branches continue to increase in girth the included bark acts like a plate preventing the stems from supporting one another. Eventually, the respective growth pushes each other apart enough to cause cracking or failure.

In the trunk, look for cracks, cavities, and decay. Trunks that have been overloaded by the snow may not have completely failed, but cracks indicate that the tree

Continued on next page



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INSPECTION OF STORM DAMAGED TREES

Continued from p. 17

is in the process of failing. When cracks go all the way through the tree, or when they occur on two sides of the trunk at right angles (like the north and east or the south and east sides of the trunk), this is a very dangerous situation. When decay or a cavity is present right next to a crack, the situation is also very dangerous. Be extremely careful about climbing such trees, as they may not be able to support a climber's weight, or the forces involved in rigging a tree for removal. When trees have severe structural defects, use a bucket truck and/or crane to minimize the risk to a climber.


In the root zone, the inspector should look for soil heaving or root plate lifting as a result of the ice/snow weight. The roots are

ultimately responsible for a tree's structural stability and a final flaw to look for is the presence of a lean. When trees show signs of leaning, but have gradually straightened up over time, this is usually not a hazardous situation. Such leaning and straightening is due to a past impetus, but by straightening, the tree shows that it has regained apical dominance and, in most cases, will ultimately balance the crown. In scenarios where trees are unnaturally leaning as a result of wind, ice, or snow loads, a hazard may occur. Poor soil conditions, mounding and cracking of the soil behind the leaning tree, and exposed roots protruding from the soil all identify an unnatural lean, this is where the tree is in danger of completely falling over.

During the inspection process the arborist needs to evaluate the tree and make a determination as to whether or not the tree can or should be saved. Trees that are severely disfigured or have lost much of their crown need to be removed. But trees that may only have several broken branches or a broken leader can and should be saved. If the tree has lost some of its crown but the root system is intact, removing damaged branches and pruning remaining leaders to encourage one to become apically dominant will help preserve the tree. Subsequent pruning will likely be necessary, as will continued tree risk inspections to ensure the tree has not become a hazard.

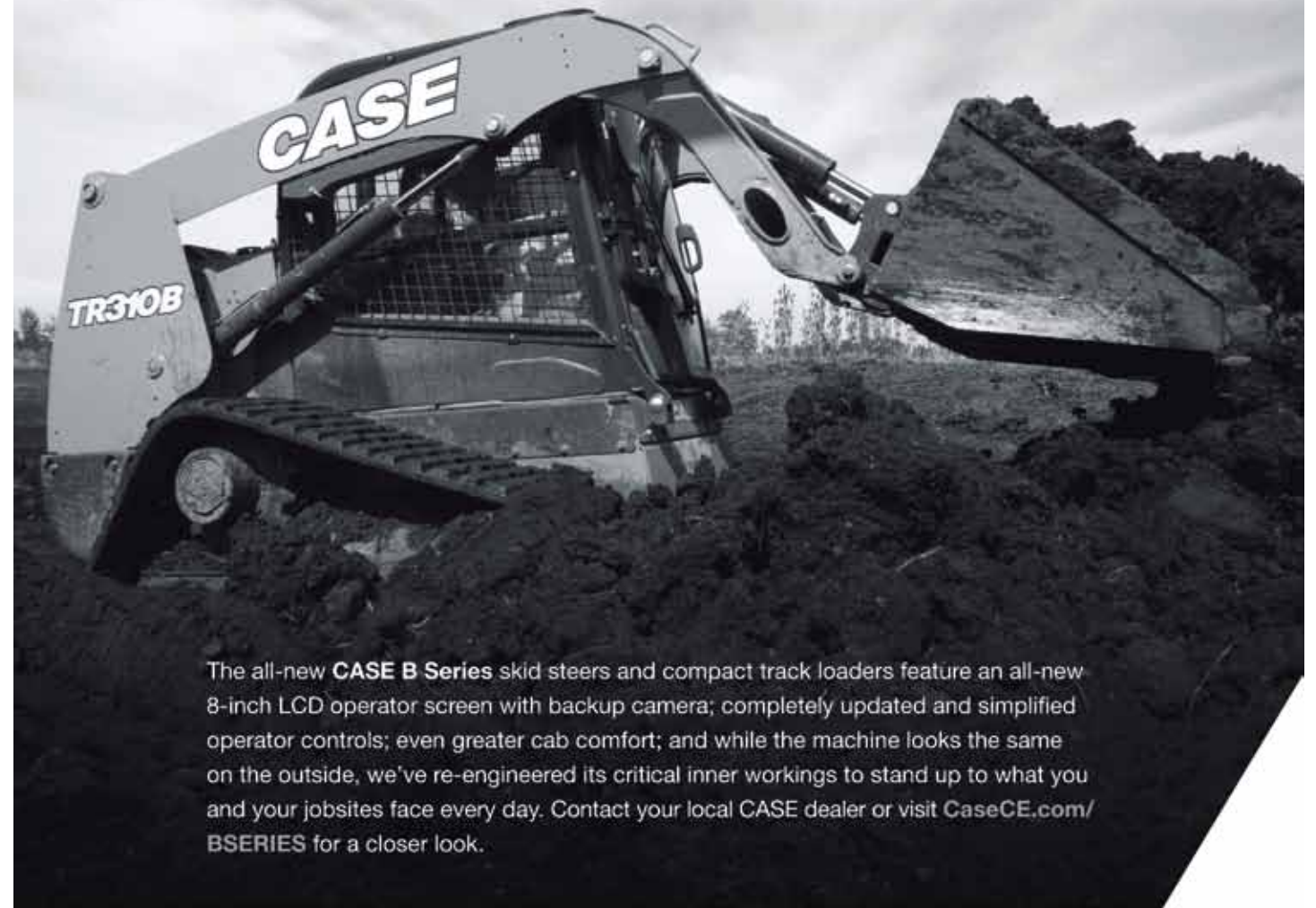
When pruning broken or damaged branches from the tree,

make proper pruning cuts to help the tree callus over the wound. Natural target pruning will result in a healthier tree with fewer internal defects and less suckering around pruning cuts. In most cases the pruning of branches is accomplished with three cuts instead of just one top cut you can eliminate any ripping of the bark down the trunk of the tree. With large branches, in addition to using three cuts, the weight of the branch will also have to be supported with a lowering rope. Bark rips are common in the springtime if the pruner is not careful.

Find a professional to assess your needs and carry out any work required! 

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with plugs or bareroot plants. Planting depth is as important with grasses as it is with other plant materials. The crown of the plant should sit just above the soil surface to avoid rotting (crown too low) or drying out (crown too high); mulching around grasses should also be done with care, as it can cause rotting if the mulch is pushed up against the crown. Grasses should be watered as needed during the establishment year, after which they may require little or no supplemental irrigation. Fertilizer is generally not necessary; it can actually be detrimental to grass plantings, making plant stems droopy and messy-looking, causing some grasses to become too aggressive, or causing surrounding plants to put on too much growth and crowd out less competitive grasses.

Grasses are fairly pest- and disease-free relative to other ornamentals. While deer tend to favor tender broadleaf plants over coarse grasses, voles and gophers can cause damage to grass root systems (Darke, 1999). Grasses may also be affected by rust diseases that appear as orange or brown patches on the

leaves. Darke (1999) suggests that maintaining good air circulation around plants and sensible cultural practices can reduce or prevent rust; rust can also be controlled with wettable sulfur or fungicides. Long-term maintenance of grasses includes little more than cutting back, generally in late winter or early spring at the first sign of new growth or in fall if dry stems present a fire hazard (Maynard, 2003), and dividing plants when they begin to get too large or their center dies out. Divisions from the outer edges of grass plants are most vigorous; they can be taken from cool season plants in late winter to early spring or late summer to mid fall, and from warm season plants in late spring into early summer.

Drought Tolerant Selections to Consider

If you are looking to expand your palette choice of drought tolerant grasses beyond the ubiquitous miscanthus varieties, look for some of the following from regional and mail-order suppliers. Some are undoubtedly easier to find in the trade right now than others, but the more landscapers ask for these, the more widely

available they will become.

Cool Season Grasses

Crinkled hairgrass (Deschampsia flexuosa 'Aurea')

- Tufted and clump-forming, less than 2 feet tall
- Zone 4
- Yellow-green foliage, billowy bronze-colored seed heads
- Performs well in dry shade

Bottlebrush grass (Elymus hystrix)

- Clump-forming, 3 to 4 feet tall
- Zone 4
- Dark green basal foliage 1 foot tall, and unusual bristle-like flowers on 3 to 4 foot stems
- Good for dry shade

Large blue fescue (Festuca amethystina 'Superba')

- Clump-forming, up to 2 feet tall
- Zone 4
- Threadlike silvery-blue foliage 12 to 16 inches tall, vivid purple flower stalks up to 2 feet tall
- Useful in same applications as the commonly planted Festuca glauca 'Elijah Blue'

June grass (Koeleria macrantha)

- Clump-forming, up to 2 feet tall
- Zone 3-4 (northern source materials)
- Light green slender foliage 2-8 inches tall, narrow flower clusters to 2 feet tall
- Appropriate with perennials and for naturalizing

Warm Season Grasses

Blue grama (Bouteloua gracilis)

- Clump-forming, 15 to 20 inches tall
- Zone 3
- Greyish green foliage 8 to 16 inches tall, reddish flower clusters jut out horizontally from flower stalks up to 20 inches tall

- Useful in borders, as specimen, and may have promise as low-maintenance turf or groundcover

Purple lovegrass (Eragrostis spectabilis)

- Clump-forming, up to 2 feet tall
- Zone 5
- Coarse green foliage is 1 to 2 feet tall, large airy clusters of reddish-purple flowers
- Good in borders, mass plantings, or for naturalizing

Little bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium 'The Blues')

- Clump-forming, from 2 to 4 feet tall (stems may flop)
- Zone 3
- Light blue foliage and stems, reddish-purple flowers less showy than fluffy white seed heads arranged along branching stems, foliage turns burgundy-red in fall
- Useful in informal plantings, meadows, as mass plantings

Prairie dropseed (Sporobolus heterolepis)

- Clump-forming, up to 3 feet tall
- Zone 4
- Threadlike foliage forms mounds 1 to 2 feet tall, flower heads are delicate open clusters and sweet-scented on 3 foot tall stems
- Good for borders, as specimen, also useful for mass plantings and naturalizing

References

Darke, R. 1999. *The Color Encyclopedia of Ornamental Grasses*. Timber Press, Portland, OR.
 Maynard, B. 2003. *Ornamental Grasses*. GreenShare Fact Sheet. University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI. 🌿

area that often needs attention and will help the health of a tree.

Recommended Practices

Before applying fertilizers, it's important to conduct a soil test. Determine the true makeup of the soil as well as pH and cation exchange capacity so you can choose the best course of action.

When trees begin to decline, a proper program, especially lab analysis of the surrounding soil, will help you determine the missing nutrients and replace them in the soil.

Slow-release nitrogen fertilizer is recommended, as it helps prevent leaching. Fast-release fertilizers give instant gratification, but the plant is taking all that up too quickly, preventing steady, even growth.

Deep-root application is the best method. That brings the fertilizer either below the turfgrass root zone or beneath the mulch layer if it happens to be in a bed. Nitrogen helps the microorganisms break down mulch more quickly. Surface applications can lead to quicker mulch breakdown.

Getting that below is beneficial.

As for when to conduct tree fertilization, the best times are in the spring and fall due to cooler weather and moisture in the soil, as the tree can uptake the nutrients at a greater rate.

In the spring, there will be a lot of really green above-ground growth, so use a higher nitrogen fertilizer. It promotes above-ground growth. In the fall go with a higher phosphorus and potassium to promote root growth.

Common Mistakes

Overfertilization is the main mistake when it comes to tree fertilization. It can cause a tree to produce succulent tissue that's more vulnerable to certain insects and diseases.

If you push a lot of growth and the tree is not allocating its

resources to defense, it can really upset that balance. You need to know what you're doing, so call in an expert if needed.

Another common mistake is not applying the proper amount of fertilizer to a specific tree or having a poor grid pattern that does not properly disperse the product. Using high nitrogen products in hotter times of the year can result in root damage. Trunk injections aren't ideal, either, because they wound the tree. A wound is an infection point. Injecting fertilizer subsurface is really important. 🌿

— article extracted from the *National Association of Landscape Professionals*, <https://blog.landscapeprofessionals.org>

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—Henry Van Dyke, American author (1852-1933)

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Calendar

■ **MARCH 22-23**

Northeast Hardscape Expo, Springfield, MA Eastern States Exposition. Special rates for NHLA members; nhlaonline.org/happening-now

■ **MARCH 29**

NHLA Safety Day, cover story.

■ **MARCH 30-31**

UNHCE Landscaping for Water Quality, Swanzey, des.nh.gov/events/2023-landscaping-water-quality-workshop

■ **APRIL 1**

UNH Macfarlane Research Greenhouses Open House, 9 am - 3 pm, see page 15.

■ **APRIL 22**

Earth Day, www.earthday.org

■ **APRIL 28**

National Arbor Day, www.arborday.org

■ **MAY 6**

NHLA Paver and Block Wall Installation Workshop, see page 13

■ **AUGUST 1**

SAVE THE DATE: Annual NHLA Golf Tournament