



Hort Notes

An educational newsletter with research-based information for businesses and individuals involved in selling, planning, designing, servicing, and enjoying landscapes and gardens.

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Current Monitoring Checklist

PLANT PHENOLOGY FOR JUNE: BETWEEN 400 - 499 GROWING DEGREE DAYS

http://www.umassgreeninfo.org/fact_sheets/ipmtools/400_499_GDD.html

Wild Violets: They were pretty until they got away!

Wild violets are native to North America and a member of the violet family or Violaceae. Several perennial species of violets are found in New England and free hybridization can make it difficult to distinguishing among them. Common blue violet (*Viola papilionacea*) is often considered a weed in landscape and turf areas. Heart-shaped and regularly-lobed leaves are attached to crowns with long petioles. The foliage is frost hardy and remains mostly evergreen, but will decay when covered with snow and ice for long periods. Plants form a dense, fibrous root system. Five-petaled purple or blue flowers (occasionally light purple, gray or white) with white or yellow centers arise from crowns on leafless stalks from April to June. These flowers are approximately the same height as the foliage and usually infertile.

Violets also produce fertile cleistogamous flowers. These less conspicuous, self-pollinating flowers are produced closer to the ground, never open and bury themselves under the soil surface. Small fruit capsule splits in three at maturity. Reproduction is also from short, branching rhizomes. Violets grow best in moist, fertile, cool and shady areas, but can establish and persist in sunny and/or drought prone locations.

Wild violets are persistent perennial weed and one of the most difficult to control. Violets can be eliminated from turf or landscape areas with repeated hand-pulling or digging which attempts to remove all vegetative portions of the plant. This can be very tedious and diligence is required. Directed applications of glyphosate (Roundup™, Touchdown™) can be use in ornamental beds, nurseries and

non-turf areas.

Control of wild violets in turf areas will require the use of a postemergence broadleaf herbicide. The two and three-way combinations of phenoxy (2,4-D, 2,4-DP, MCPA) and benzoic acid (dicamba) herbicides may require several applications over an extended period of time and most often will result in only fair control. The best control is provided by triclopyr, either alone or in two- and three-way combinations with other broadleaf herbicides. Products include, but limited to, Confront™, Momentum™, Chaser™, Chaser 2 Amine™, Battleship™, Turflon Ester™. Preen & Green for Lawns™ is a homeowner formulation containing triclopyr.

Applications of broadleaf herbicides should be made between late April and mid-June or early September to mid-October. Frequently, two or more applications are needed with fall application generally being more effective.

Keep in mind that this weed is extremely difficult weed to manage. A reasonable goal for the first year would be to prevent the spread of the existing population. If control attempts fail, perhaps one should try to appreciate the attractive flowers of this tough to manage weed.

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Safe Tree Removal

The 2000 Z-133 Arboricultural Standard outlines what the Z133 committee and the NAA Safety committee consider to be the “best management practice” during removal operations in an arboricultural setting. Remember, when the word “**shall**” is used in this Standard, it denotes a mandatory requirement.

Chainsaws

There have been some significant changes outlined in how chainsaws are to be used by arborists. The major change that affects all workers is the use of leg protection. Chainsaw resistant leg protection **shall** be worn by all groundworkers while operating a chainsaw. While this has been the standard operating procedure in many companies for some time, now it is required. This Standard applies to all workers, even the climber who pitches in to help with the clean-up at the end of the day. Leg protection is required before using a chainsaw on the ground, even if it is only for one cut. Chainsaw resistant leg protection is not required when working in a bucket or when climbing in a tree.

Small, lightweight chainsaws can also be the cause of another problem, cut lines. Every year we hear of climbers who have cut their climbing line or lanyard with a chainsaw and have fallen from the tree. While this was not a major problem in the past, with the advent of small lightweight chainsaws it is happening more often. Climbers are now required to use a second point of attachment (work positioning lanyard or double crotched rope) when operating chainsaws in a tree. Some climbers and companies may question this rule, complaining that it will slow down their work. Today, every climber carries a lanyard and if they get into the habit of throwing it over a limb or around a stem, it could save their life.

Tree Removal

Tree removal is probably the most exciting aspect of the tree care industry and while most arborists are sorry to see a big old tree die, there is a certain amount of thrill that comes from working a big removal. Unfortunately there are risks involved in any removal, big or small. The June 2001 issue of Tree Care Industry reports that 30% of the fatalities that take place in the tree care industry “occur when either the chainsaw operator or a co-worker are struck by a tree or spar being felled from the ground”.

The major problem leading up to these accidents is a lack of communication between the crew leader and the rest of the crew. If everyone on the job site knows what they are to do and what the rest of the crew is doing, we will reduce accidents. Before beginning any tree removal operation, the chain saw operator and/or crew leader **shall** carefully consider the following conditions during the planning process. The following tree and site factors need to be considered and the crew must take appropriate actions to ensure a safe removal operation:

- (1) Surrounding areas including other trees and the tree to be removed;
- (2) Species and shape of the tree;
- (3) Direction of lean of the tree;
- (4) Overhead hazards, loose limbs, dead tops, utility lines;
- (5) Wind force and direction;
- (6) Decayed or weak spots throughout the tree (be aware of additional hazards if these conditions exist in the hinge area);
- (7) Location and means to protect other persons and property;
- (8) Size and terrain characteristics or limitations of the work area.
- (9) When it is necessary to shorten or remove branches before dropping the tree, the arborist shall attempt to determine if the tree can withstand the mechanical stresses and strain of the lowering procedures. If not, other means of removing the tree should be considered.

When the tree and the site have been reviewed, the work plan for the removal operation **shall** be communicated to all crew members in a job briefing before commencing work. The key is to communicate the plan so that all of the workers **shall** be positioned and their duties organized so the actions of one worker will not create a hazard for any other worker.

Always plan for something to go wrong. Remember Murphy? If something can go wrong , it will! A planned escape route for all workers **shall** be prepared before cutting any standing tree or trunk. The preferable escape route for the chain saw operator is 45 degrees on either side of a line drawn opposite the intended direction of the fall. Clear all obstructions at the base of the tree or trunk and along the escape path. The chainsaw operator **shall** use this path to withdraw, once the cut has been completed.

The methodology on felling notches has been evolving over the past decade and while the 2000 Standard calls for notches that **shall** be 45 degrees or greater, it is the opinion of the author that the open-face notch is the preferred method, because of the added safety and control that it gives the feller.

Notches **shall** be used on all trees and trunks over 5 inches (12.5cm) in diameter at breast height. An adequate notch depth should not exceed 1/3 of the diameter of the tree and the back cut **shall** not

penetrate into the predetermined hinge area.

With a conventional notch (between 45 and 70 degrees), the back cut **shall** be 1-2 inches (2.5-5cm) above the apex of the notch to provide an adequate platform to prevent kickback of the tree or trunk. With an open-face notch (greater than 70 degrees) the back cut should be at the same level as the apex of the notch.

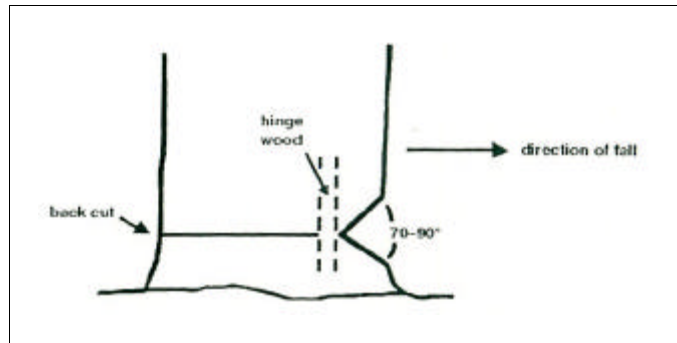


Fig.1 The open-faced notch will give the feller or the climber more control of the felling, with less chance of a split or rip taking place. With the open-faced notch, the back cut should be at the same level as the apex of the notch.

Again, the Z133.1 Standard emphasizes the importance of communication to all crew members, before the cutting starts. Before commencing the back cut, there **shall** be a command such as, “stand clear” from the arborist operating the chainsaw and a response such as, “all clear” from the workers supporting the removal operation. Pre-arranged two-way hand signals may also be used. All workers in the vicinity **shall** be out of range when the tree or trunk falls. Visual contact should be maintained with the tree or trunk until it is on the ground. Only designated persons **shall** give such signals and once the back cut has been completed, the chainsaw operator **shall** immediately move a safe distance away from the tree or trunk on the planned escape route.

Summary

Every day arborists remove trees in a safe and professional manner, without property damage or worker injury. The Z133.1 Standard is the Arboricultural Safety Standard for our industry, it is very important that you and your crews be familiar with the Standard. Copies of the Standard are available from the ISA and the NAA office.

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