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Prune Your Evergreens To Spruce Up The Yard

By Michael Gaines



Pruned Evergreen make for a spectacular display. (CW Arborists, Ltd.)

East Hampton - Pruned and healthy evergreens such as White Pine, Leyland Cypress and Arborvitae are both attractive and utilitarian elements of home landscaping. As components in a privacy screen or "living wall," evergreens are valuable, because they keep their foliage year-round and provide windbreaks helping your home maintain its temperature and save on fuel bills. An important element of maintaining the health and utility of your evergreens is that they are pruned regularly and at the proper time of year.

Pruning essentially involves removing tree branches to improve the health, landscape effect, or value of the tree. It is done to fix structural instability and increase the use of resources for the tree. The winter season is considered a preferred time of year for this type of pruning, because there is less insect activity and a reduced chance for the tree to contract disease.

Regular pruning is an important aspect of evergreen care, make sure you are pruning trees properly and safely, as improper technique could do more harm than good.



Large vehicles with a built-in basket for workers are needed to prune tall evergreens.

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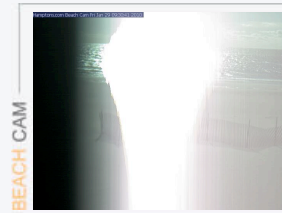
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I'm dedicated to the importance of trees, not only for the beauty they add to landscaping, but as a critical natural resource, and I believe that environmental conservation begins with education.

These are some evergreen pruning tips for homeowners:

- Remember safety first! Use gloves and protective eyewear to help avoid injury and inspect the ladder before using it. Do NOT use ladders that have any broken or missing parts.
- Inspect all tools before beginning. Any tools that appear damaged or broken should be repaired or replaced. Make sure all tools are clean and sharp before you begin.
- Follow a plan. Consider the reason or purpose before any cuts are made, proper planning can reduce the number of cuts.
- Remove all dead, broken, diseased or otherwise problematic branches. This often is enough pruning to allow a desired amount of air and light. If the amount of wood removed is considerable (around 10 percent of the tree), further pruning may need to be delayed until the following year or even further into the future.



Taking special caution with an Osprey's nest.

• Michael Gaines is founder and president of CW Arborists, Ltd. (located in East Hampton). CW Arborists, Ltd. is a licensed and insured professional arboricultural company that specializes in sensible tree care and environmental health while practicing conservation. For more information go to www.cwarborists.com

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