



IT'S STARTING TO THAW—WHAT DO I DO NOW???

With all of the snow, ice, and freezing temperatures we've had, followed by flooding for many of us, we are bound to see some plant damage. Now is a great time to have a professional arborist come take a look at your trees and assess how well they have weathered these storms. At the least, get out in the yard yourself and take a look around. Some problems will be readily apparent; some may not show up until later in the year. Here is a short synopsis of how to deal with problems that you are likely to find.



Outright breakage: Heavy snow loads, ice, and wind have caused a lot of breakage, especially in trees. Prune out any obvious breaks, cutting stubs back to the branch collar. Where ragged strips have been torn from trunks, clean up these areas so that the bark is firmly attached to the tree. These wounds will heal fastest when the area to be repaired is spindle-shaped (round sides, pointy at the top and bottom—think of the shape of natural knots on a tree).



Dieback: Dieback may appear right away, or you might see it after spring hits and new growth starts. Wait to do anything until you have a clear picture. Remedies will range from corrective pruning to plant removal.



Splaying or "Snow Wedging": when heavy, wet snow or ice builds up on conifers such as pyramidalis or Italian cypress, it can cause a wedge that causes upright branches to splay outward. Usually, tying the plant with green stretch ties will correct the problem. Sometimes you can prune out a splayed branch and allow the area to fill in. (This can take several years.) Severe cases may require plant replacement.



Root heaving: Soils can sometimes get wet enough and/or snow loads heavy enough that plants begin to tip. This can happen especially with young trees that haven't yet established a good wide root structure. Plants that do this need to be "replanted". Get the roots firmly back into the ground, inspecting them first for breaks or damage that may need to be pruned out. Stake the plants as necessary.

These are probably the most common problems that you may see. Other unique situations may happen. Sky's staff can help you find a solution for your circumstances.