

Install and maintain structural supports for trees

Overview

This standard covers installing and maintaining structural supports for trees. These are supports to aid the stability of trees. Bracing or supporting a tree means installing, in the appropriate circumstances, a flexible or rigid system into the tree to support its trunk and or branches thereby reducing the risk of failure.

Access to tree crowns can be either by Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) or rope and harness techniques.

You could be working to a given specification that defines the methods to be used but you will be expected to determine how to carry out these methods on site.

You will need to take account of any restrictions affecting the work e.g. designated sites, the presence of listed structures, wildlife, non-native invasive or protected species etc.

You are required to avoid or minimise damage or disturbance to the surrounding area including trees, other vegetation, wildlife and habitats, or to any structures, fences, paths, signs, ditches/waterways or drains, and to ensure that other site users are not put at risk by your work.

When working with equipment and machinery you must be appropriately trained, competent to carry out the activity being undertaken, and hold current certification where required, in line with the relevant legislation.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice, industry standards and guidance.

This standard is only suitable for those who are already competent in accessing trees by climbing or using a MEWP.

Falls from trees or being hit by falling trees, sections of trees or branches can kill or seriously injure workers on site or those passing by.

Confirm that:

- safe practices are adopted for accessing and working in trees
- the layout and organisation of the work area protects all parties from the risk of

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falling objects

- risk zones are established and people are prohibited from entering the zone
- risk zones are, where reasonably practicable, clearly marked, signed and guarded
- communication methods between all workers on site are robust and effective

Additional resources may be required on site, such as banksmen, to help manage any risk associated with anyone possibly entering the work site.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. obtain the relevant information to carry out the work activities, in accordance with organisational procedures
2. check any statutory requirements that might be in place that may prohibit or place conditions on the work to be carried out, and confirm that all required permissions and licences have been obtained
3. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
4. assess the risks associated with the site and the work to be carried out before starting work and throughout the activity, checking and confirming the findings of any existing risk assessments
5. confirm that sufficient control measures are implemented, risk zones have been set up and marked, and emergency planning and procedures relevant to the site have been established and recorded
6. select an appropriate access method and rescue plan for safe working at height
7. select the safest working methods, making use of mechanical methods where this is safer, in accordance with the assessed risks and organisational procedures, and plan work accordingly
8. confirm that relevant training, experience and certification is in place to undertake the work to be carried out and recognise your own competence limitations
9. use appropriate methods to maintain effective communication with other workers and anyone else involved in, or affected by the work, in accordance with industry guidance and organisational procedures
10. confirm that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work to be carried out is worn at all times
11. select, prepare, use, maintain and store the tools and equipment required safely, in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and manufacturer's instructions
12. confirm all equipment has been checked, tested where required, and is fit for purpose in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and manufacturer's instructions
13. maintain the safety and security of tools and equipment on site
14. select the most suitable structural support system for the situation and the well-

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being of the tree

15. obtain the materials required for the work in accordance with organisational procedures

16. calculate the expected load and select compatible components with regard to their design/safety factors

17. determine the appropriate position of the installation according to the situation

18. install the selected structural support system into the tree, following current British Safety Standard guidelines and minimising damage to the tree and the environment

19. plan and implement an inspection regime for maintaining structural supports for trees

20. carry out the required work in accordance with the information provided and organisational procedures

21. minimise damage or disturbance to the site and surrounding area while carrying out the work, and confirm that the site is left in a safe and tidy condition

22. implement best practice approaches to sustainability that are appropriate for the work being carried out

23. deal effectively with issues that arise within the scope and limitations of your responsibilities and report issues which cannot be resolved, in accordance with organisational procedures

24. complete and store all relevant documentation in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and organisational procedures

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand: