

TCIA ISSUE BRIEF

Supporting Healthy Trees, Strong Communities, and a More Resilient Future



Healthy Trees & Green Infrastructure

Trees are essential assets that provide environmental, economic, and social benefits to communities across the United States. They improve air quality, manage stormwater, reduce energy consumption, increase property values, support public health, and enhance the quality of life in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

The tree care industry plays a critical role in protecting and maintaining these benefits. Professional arborists, utility vegetation managers, and tree care companies help communities manage aging trees, respond to invasive pests, improve public safety, and preserve the long-term health of urban and community forests.

As communities increasingly invest in green infrastructure and environmental resilience, public policy plays an important role in ensuring that trees and forests receive the attention, resources, and management they require to thrive.

☑ TCIA advocates for science-based policies and investments that support healthy trees, resilient communities, and sustainable management practices.

Why It Matters

Healthy trees are more than a landscape amenity, they are vital infrastructure. Well-managed trees provide shade, reduce urban heat, improve air and water quality, mitigate stormwater runoff, support wildlife habitat, and contribute to community well-being. Research consistently demonstrates that healthy tree canopies provide significant environmental and economic returns that benefit residents, businesses, and local governments alike.

However, trees face increasing challenges from invasive pests, diseases, extreme weather, drought, development pressures, and aging urban forests. Without proper management and investment, communities risk losing many of the benefits trees provide. Protecting and expanding healthy tree resources requires collaboration among policymakers, communities, land managers, and tree care professionals.

TCIA's Position

TCIA supports policies that:

- Promote the health, safety, and longevity of urban and community forests.
- Encourage science-based tree care and vegetation management practices.
- Support access to effective plant health care tools.
- Increase investments in urban and community forestry programs.
- Improve resilience against invasive pests, diseases, and environmental stresses.
- Recognize trees and green infrastructure as critical community assets.
- Encourage professional management and stewardship of tree resources.

Healthy trees strengthen communities, support economic growth, and improve quality of life for future generations.

Areas of Focus

Responsible Plant Health Care

Trees are increasingly threatened by insects, diseases, invasive species, environmental stressors, and changing climate conditions. Professional arborists rely on a variety of science-based management tools to diagnose, prevent, and treat these threats.

Responsible plant health care practices help preserve valuable tree resources, improve public safety, and reduce long-term management costs.

☑ TCIA supports access to effective, science-based tools and management strategies that allow qualified professionals to protect tree health while safeguarding public and environmental well-being.

Urban and Community Forestry Investment

Urban and community forests deliver significant public benefits, but they require ongoing care and management to remain healthy and safe. Many communities face growing challenges related to aging tree populations, deferred maintenance, storm damage, and limited resources. Investments in urban forestry programs help communities plant, maintain, inventory, and manage trees that provide long-term environmental, economic, and quality-of-life benefits.

☑ TCIA supports public investments that strengthen urban and community forestry programs while encouraging partnerships between communities and qualified tree care professionals.

Invasive Species Management

Invasive insects, diseases, and plants continue to threaten tree populations throughout North America.

Pests such as emerald ash borer, spotted lanternfly, Asian longhorned beetle, hemlock woolly adelgid, and other emerging threats can significantly alter landscapes, increase management costs, and diminish the benefits provided by trees.

Early detection, coordinated response efforts, public education, and science-based management practices are essential to protecting urban and community forests from these threats.

☑ **TCIA supports collaborative efforts among government agencies, researchers, communities, and industry stakeholders to address invasive species challenges.**

Green Infrastructure and Community Resilience

Trees are a critical component of modern green infrastructure systems. Communities increasingly rely on trees and green spaces to help address challenges such as stormwater management, heat mitigation, air quality improvement, and resilience to extreme weather events. Strategic investments in tree canopy and green infrastructure can complement traditional infrastructure systems while providing multiple environmental and economic benefits.

☑ **TCIA supports policies that recognize the value of trees as infrastructure and encourage their integration into community planning and resilience strategies.**

Public Awareness and Tree Stewardship

Long-term success depends upon public understanding of the benefits trees provide and the importance of professional tree care. Property owners, businesses, community leaders, and policymakers make decisions every day that affect the health and safety of trees. Increasing awareness of proper tree care practices helps communities maximize the benefits trees provide while reducing risks associated with poor management or neglect.

☑ **TCIA supports educational initiatives that promote responsible tree stewardship and increase public appreciation for the value of professional tree care services.**

Looking Forward

Trees are among the most valuable and visible assets in our communities. As cities grow, environmental challenges intensify, and infrastructure demands increase, healthy urban and community forests will become even more important to public health, environmental quality, and economic vitality. Growing and maintaining these resources requires thoughtful policies, science-based management, and sustained investment. By supporting healthy trees and green infrastructure today, communities can improve resilience, strengthen local economies, enhance public safety, and create lasting benefits for future generations.

Protect Crews. Strengthen Businesses. Grow the Industry.

About TCIA Issue Briefs

TCIA Issue Briefs provide an overview of priority issues affecting the tree care industry and the Tree Care Industry Association's policy positions. These briefs are intended for educational purposes and may be updated as industry conditions, regulatory developments, and policy priorities evolve.