

TCIA ISSUE BRIEF

Protecting Communities, Strengthening Infrastructure, and Building Resilience



Wildfire & Utility Vegetation Management

Trees and vegetation provide enormous benefits, but they can also create risks when not properly managed near utility infrastructure or in areas vulnerable to wildfire. Across the country, communities, utilities, and land managers face growing challenges related to wildfire risk, severe weather, and infrastructure reliability. Professional tree care companies play a vital role in addressing these challenges through vegetation management, hazard tree mitigation, right-of-way maintenance, and emergency response.

✓ TCIA supports policies and investments that recognize professional vegetation management as an essential component of public safety, infrastructure protection, and community resilience.

Why It Matters

Vegetation management helps protect both people and infrastructure. Trees growing near utility systems can contribute to power outages, storm damage, and wildfire risk when not properly maintained. Likewise, communities in wildfire-prone regions face increasing challenges from drought, invasive species, extreme weather, and changing environmental conditions.

Professional tree care and vegetation management help reduce risks, improve reliability, and support healthier, more resilient landscapes. As demands on infrastructure and natural resources continue to grow, proactive vegetation management will play an increasingly important role in protecting communities.

TCIA's Position - TCIA supports policies that:

- Promote proactive vegetation management and wildfire mitigation.
- Recognize the importance of utility vegetation management programs.
- Improve infrastructure reliability and community resilience.
- Support science-based management practices.
- Encourage collaboration among utilities, government agencies, and industry professionals.
- Expand investments in vegetation management and risk reduction initiatives.
- Recognize professional tree care as an essential component of public safety.

Effective vegetation management protects lives, strengthens communities, and supports long-term environmental stewardship.

Areas of Focus

Wildfire Mitigation

Wildfire activity has increased across many regions of the United States, creating growing risks for communities, infrastructure, and natural resources. Vegetation management is a critical part of wildfire preparedness. Hazard tree removal, fuel reduction, defensible space creation, and strategic vegetation management can help reduce wildfire risks while improving forest and community health.

☑ **TCIA supports proactive approaches that help communities reduce wildfire risks before disasters occur.**

Utility Vegetation Management

Reliable energy infrastructure depends on effective vegetation management. Trees are among the leading causes of weather-related outages and can pose risks to transmission and distribution systems when not properly maintained. Utility vegetation management programs help improve reliability, protect public safety, and reduce service disruptions.

☑ **TCIA supports policies that recognize utility vegetation management as a critical component of infrastructure resilience.**

Community Resilience and Emergency Preparedness

Tree care professionals often serve on the front lines following storms, wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. From clearing roads and restoring access to removing hazardous trees and supporting recovery efforts, vegetation management plays an important role in emergency response and long-term resilience.

☑ **TCIA supports investments in preparedness, hazard mitigation, and proactive planning that help communities withstand and recover from disasters.**

Federal and State Investment

Many communities and utilities face growing vegetation management needs while operating with limited resources. Strategic investments can help reduce wildfire risk, improve infrastructure reliability, address vegetation management backlogs, and strengthen community resilience.

☑ **TCIA supports funding opportunities that leverage the expertise of qualified tree care professionals and promote long-term risk reduction.**

Science-Based Vegetation Management

Effective vegetation management requires balancing public safety, infrastructure protection, environmental stewardship, and community needs. Tree care professionals rely on industry standards, research, and best management practices to make informed decisions regarding tree maintenance and risk mitigation.

✓ **TCIA supports policies that encourage science-based decision-making and recognize the expertise of qualified arborists, utility foresters, and vegetation management professionals.**

Collaboration and Public Awareness

Successful vegetation management depends on collaboration among utilities, government agencies, property owners, communities, and tree care professionals. Public understanding of vegetation management objectives helps improve project outcomes, build trust, and reduce conflicts related to wildfire risk reduction and infrastructure protection.

✓ **TCIA supports collaborative approaches that promote practical, balanced solutions.**

Looking Forward

America's communities face growing challenges related to wildfire risk, extreme weather, and infrastructure reliability.

Professional tree care and vegetation management will continue to play an essential role in reducing risks and strengthening resilience. By investing in proactive management strategies, supporting science-based policies, and recognizing the expertise of tree care professionals, policymakers can help create safer communities and more reliable infrastructure.

Strong vegetation management programs don't just respond to problems—they help prevent them.

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.