

**ASPEN RIDGE LANDSCAPING & TREE SERVICE, INC.**  
**aspenridge.net**

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 618  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

Telephone

(262) 593-2276

SELECTING THE BEST ARBORIST FOR THE JOB

What is a Certified Arborist:

An arborist by definition is an individual who is trained in the art and science of planting, caring for and maintaining individual trees. Certification provides a measurable assessment of an individual's knowledge and competence required to provide proper tree care.

Certified Arborists are individuals who have achieved a level of knowledge in the art and science of tree care through at least three years experience and who have passed a comprehensive examination. Certified Arborists must also continue their education to maintain their certification.

Aspen Ridge Landscaping & Tree Service was established in 1990. The Owner, David C. Gust, is a Certified Arborist, # WI-0425A. We are members of the Wisconsin Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture.

There are a variety of things to consider when selecting an arborist which include:

1. **Ask for proof of insurance.** The proof of insurance (certificate of insurance) should be sent directly to you from the insurance company insuring the arborist. Don't accept a certificate of insurance from the arborist himself or herself; the insurance company providing the insurance should provide you with the certificate of insurance. A reputable arborist will have personal and property damage insurance as well as workers compensation insurance. Many homeowners have had to pay out large amounts of money for damages caused by an uninsured individual claiming to be a tree expert. You could be held responsible for damages and injuries that occur as a result of the job. Keep in mind even if a company, such as a landscaping company, may have liability insurance, they might not have proper coverage for tree work.
2. **Ask for references** to find out where the company has done work similar to the work you are requesting. Don't hesitate to check references or visit other worksites where the company or individual has done tree work.

Remember, tree care is a substantial, long-lasting investment. I am always pleased to provide references.

3. **Be wary of individuals who go door-to-door** and offer bargains for performing tree work. Most reputable companies are too occupied to solicit work in this manner. Improper tree care can take many years to correct itself, and in some cases never correct itself. Be especially careful after a storm when individuals show up at your door ready to perform the tree work immediately.
4. **Good arborists will only perform accepted practices.** For example, practices such as topping a tree, removing an excessive amount of live wood, using climbing spikes on trees which are not being removed, and removing or disfiguring living trees without just cause, are unnecessary.
5. **There are standards in place for our profession:** Ansi A300 Standards for tree pruning and care; Ansi 2133.1 for safety. We base our everyday activities, as should all certified arborists, around these standards, to provide the best care for your trees while providing a culture for safety.
6. **Don't always accept the low bid.** You should examine the credentials and the written specifications of the companies who submitted bids and determine the best combination of price, work to be done, skill and professionalism to protect your substantial investment.
7. **Get it in writing.** Most reputable arborists will have their clients sign a contract. Be sure to read the contract carefully. Don't be afraid to ask questions such as "when will the work be started? Who will be responsible for clean-up? Is this the total price? If I would like more to be done, what is your hourly rate?" I always provide a written estimate and require a clients signature before the work is started.

