

## Denver Forestry Division Fact Sheet

Call 720-913-0651 for assistance

# Pruning Storm Damaged Trees

Storms can break tree branches causing eventual disease to the tree, dangerous obstructions to utilities or pedestrians and an unsightly tree. Pruning the damaged parts promptly can save the tree and improve its appearance.

- Contact Excel Energy or a licensed arborist if the branch that requires pruning is within twelve feet of power lines, cannot be reached without the use of a ladder, or if power equipment (such as a chainsaw) is needed. A list of licensed contractors is provided on Denver Parks and Recreation Forestry website.
- Remove branches over two inches in diameter using the three cut method. This prevents the bark from stripping before the branch is completely removed. The first cut is an undercut; twelve to eighteen inches from the healthy branch. The second cut is made just outside of the undercut on the topside of the branch. This will allow the branch to break away without damaging the healthy branch. The third and final cut is the removal of the remaining stub.
- Cut the branch outside of the swollen area, or branch collar, where the branch is attached to the healthy branch. Cutting into the collar (flush cutting) destroys natural defense mechanisms in the tree and increases the probability of infection. Do not make flush cuts, leave stubs on the tree or cover the cuts with any type of wound dressing, such as paint.

The Denver Forestry Division will not pick up tree branches. During most snow storms Solid Waste will collect bundled and tied branches cut to four-foot lengths (with no branches over four inches in diameter) with scheduled trash collection. Each week thereafter, Solid Waste will collect a maximum of ten bundles, weighing no more than 50 pounds each. Solid Waste will pick up these branches during regular trash pickup if they are put in four by four-foot bundles. Residents are asked to store branches on their property and then put only a few bundles in the trash each week as space permits. Registered hauling companies are available to assist residents with the removal of large branches. A list of registered hauling companies is provided on our website.