

Carry out aerial tree-pruning operations

Overview

This standard is about working off ground to carry out aerial tree-pruning operations. It includes carrying out reductions, crown-lifting, re-pollarding, thinning and crown cleaning.

You will need to carry out a tree hazard evaluation and perform a “working at height” assessment before starting this work. Access to the tree will be by recognised appropriate methods and in line with the above assessments.

You will select suitable pruning tools relevant to the work to be carried out.

When working with machinery you need to be appropriately trained, and hold current certification where required, in line with relevant legislation.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice when carrying out this work.

This standard is only suitable for those who are already competent in climbing trees and/or using a Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP).

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with the site and the proposed work, including working at height
2. select and use the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work
3. select, prepare and use the appropriate tools and equipment safely and effectively
4. confirm all equipment has been checked and is fit for purpose
5. select and use access and positioning methods, appropriate to the assessed risks and the method statement
6. inspect access equipment to ensure it is safe and fit for use according to the manufacturer's instructions and the relevant legislation
7. select an appropriate anchor point for the access equipment so that the anchor point/position will not be compromised by the tree or any part of the work being carried out
8. reassess the anchor point for the access or positioning of the Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) throughout the duration of the works
9. communicate with the ground staff in relation to the appearance and progress of the aerial pruning operation
10. maintain effective teamwork when working with others to carry out aerial tree pruning
11. interpret the specification and measurements of applications
12. perform the aerial pruning operation in line with management objectives
13. ensure all arisings are dropped into the planned drop zone without compromising the access equipment or damaging the infrastructure
14. deal appropriately with the arisings
15. deal with any problems within your own level of responsibility
16. ensure the site is left in a condition which meets environmental requirements, in accordance with the specification
17. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with relevant legislation

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks
2. how to interpret risk assessments
3. the control measures to be implemented for the risks involved, including working at height
4. the selection, use and care of personal protective equipment (PPE)
5. the types of tools and equipment required and how to maintain and use these safely and effectively in line with the manufacturer's recommendations
6. the legal requirements for checking equipment
7. the emergency planning and procedures relevant to the site
8. the implications of different tree species, their condition and the time of year, when planning to perform pruning operations, also how these will affect the work
9. how to evaluate the tree for hazards relevant to tree-pruning operations and the implications of the hazards identified
10. the basic principles of tree biology and how these affect tree-pruning operations
11. the advantages and disadvantages of the available pruning tools to the selected pruning operations
12. the importance of accurate and appropriate cuts when removing branch material
13. the additional safeguards required during re-pollarding of trees
14. the prescriptive pruning terms and measurements
15. the measurement terms and how to apply them
16. the importance of checking how well you worked with others when carrying out aerial tree pruning
17. the importance of evaluating the actions taken when dealing with any problems when carrying out aerial tree pruning operations
18. the potential impact of your work on the environment and how this can be minimised
19. your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation

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Scope/range

Carry out pruning operations by climbing or using a MEWP or both:

- reductions
- crown-lifting
- re-pollarding
- thinning
- crown cleaning

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