

Good day,

The areas that I can discuss with my professional experience would be the difficulty and danger of people attempting to do this work on their own to save money. That would open up the potential of someone getting seriously injured by live power lines or any of the dangers associated with tree trimming, for example, falling, being cut with a chainsaw or other power tool, being hit by falling debris, and even being hit by a car when working along the roadside.

There are positives: the homeowner would have more control over how their trees are pruned, trees can be assets to properties and improper pruning can permanently damage them. The optimal situation would be that the homeowner would be able to pay a professional to prune the trees how they want them pruned while also addressing the requirements stated in this bill.

In my experience as an arborist who has been working in this field at the highest level for over a decade, a good portion of our business is from customers who want to address these very issues. Homeowners already have concerns regarding potential liability and want to make sure they are covered as far as trees on their property not causing damage to someone or something-such as motorists and power lines. Another concern most homeowners I work for have is interruption of power service to their homes due to their trees encroaching on power lines.

There are things that I have, as a professional, noticed from working on roadside trees often. One is that some roadside trees are often pruned repeatedly when it would be better to remove them; for example, junk trees, invasive trees, and sick trees. On the other hand, trees that are beneficial to the property owner and the island, (such as native trees, fruit trees, rare trees, etc.) are often pruned improperly in an attempt to cut them back from power lines, causing permanent damage to the trees.

I think there are a lot of potential problems with suddenly requiring homeowners to be responsible for these areas, but to own property requires responsibility for the trees that grow there.

Clay Jones
Arborist