

Overnight storms have left a trail of tree damage throughout portions of Nebraska.

When assessing storm-damaged trees, Eric Berg, Nebraska Forest Service community forestry program leader, urges individuals to use caution and follow a few tips.

When inspecting trees for storm damage, look for splits or cracks in the trunk and major limbs, as well as disturbed soil around the trunk. This indicates a possible structural problem. If suspecting the tree sustained structural damage, contact a certified arborist.

Never climb a damaged tree to remove limbs or attempt any type of clean-up on a tree that is leaning or has a split trunk or branches. These tasks are best left to certified arborists.

Never remove or trim branches that are interfering with power lines or are near downed power lines. Instead, contact the local power company.

Watch for falling limbs when clearing fallen branches under the tree's canopy.

Professional foresters and certified arborists agree that topping harms trees and increases the likelihood of structural problems, as well as a tree's recovery time after a storm.

With high winds and saturated soil conditions, many young trees may need to be straightened and restaked to stabilize the root ball and prevent further damage.