

Gaston Grower Spotlight August 2023

If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around does it make a sound? While that question may still be up for debate there is no debating how brutal our summer storms have been at the start of August. The high winds have caused many issues for the trees that aren't in the forest but are in earshot of Gaston County Residents. The pictures in this spotlight are of a Red Maple that was subject to one of our summer storm's devastating winds. This spotlight will highlight how to best prevent this type of damage to the trees around you.

Pruning for Prevention

Tree failure issues are best prevented through proper structural pruning at a younger age. The tree pictured to the left had multiple main stems of similar size. The issue with leaving multiple main stems on a tree as shown in the example is that these main stems can grow together, this is called a bark inclusion. Bark inclusions weaken the structure of the tree. Selecting healthy nursery stock with good structure and correcting tree structure sooner could have prevented this issue caused by the storm. A little time invested in pruning a tree early in its life could save you thousands in maintenance and property damage expenses as the tree matures. In the case of the relatively young tree used as the example in this spotlight, with proper maintenance it can recover from this damage. A larger tree would have a much more difficult time recovering. Here at Cooperative Extension of Gaston County we are happy to assist you in learning how to give your young trees the best start. It is always best before your larger trees sustain damage to [contact a certified arborist](#) to guide your decisions for tree failure prevention



