



ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

Email or mail your questions to: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or
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Question of the Week: *I'm wondering if there is a possibility of cutting off the top of a weeping cherry tree and still have it live. I would like a smaller, tidier tree since it is now growing terribly close to the roadside electrical wires. Thanks for your advice. – Jackie*

Linda's Answer:

Jackie-You definitely do not want to cut off the top of your weeping cherry tree. That is called 'topping' which can cause a number of problems:

- 1) A tree that has been topped looks bad,
- 2) Topping a tree increases the chances a tree will become diseased or pest infested because of the multiple open wounds,
- 3) The tree's ability to make food by photosynthesis is greatly impaired, which will shorten the life of the tree,
- 4) Topping removes the canopy leaves that the bark needs for shade; without the leaves, it will get scalded and damaging sunburn,
- 5) Topping a tree is very stressful for the tree and it will eventually die,
- 6) After a tree is topped, it will start growing what are called "water sprouts" (not true branches) that appear to fill in the tree, but are not well attached structurally. They generally grow out at odd angles and will break easily in the wind,



There are proper pruning methods to reduce the height of trees by removing selective limbs where they originate at a larger stem. Sometimes, this process must be done over several years. This type of pruning is best left to a licensed arborist, who is trained on how to do this correctly. For very good reasons, Connecticut law requires that every tree company that does pruning must have an arborist licensed by Connecticut DEEP. Licensed arborists undergo extensive training and must pass a rigorous examination in order to get their state license. Tree topping is taken very seriously by the state and the tree care industry. If an arborist tops a tree, he or she will lose their license.

The best advice is to plant the proper tree in the first place. Sprigs & Twigs has trained licensed arborists on staff and provides expert tree care services in tree selection, planting, proper pruning or free consultation. Give us a call.

**"Ask the Landscape Professional" articles are all on our website;
if you missed any, go to www.SprigsandTwigs.net**

Sprigs & Twigs is now scheduling appointments for 2015 Garden Design, Landscape Maintenance, Tree Care Services, Custom Stonework and Custom Carpentry Services. Go to www.SprigsandTwigs.net for details. Call us anytime to discuss your landscape needs and to meet with our staff.

Sprigs & Twigs is a highly regarded, professional, full service, national award winning company that services all aspects of outdoor living spaces. We are completely organic. Visit our website www.sprigsandtwigs.net or call us for more information.



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The Landscape Professionals

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 19 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects..

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