



## Is It Really Healthy?

As arborists, we are often confronted with the question, “Is my tree healthy?” Well, there are a lot of answers to that question depending on species, location, and other stresses that affect the health of our trees. It makes me think, is there such thing as a healthy buckthorn, honeysuckle or even boxelder? Health is defined as “the condition of being of sound body, mind; freedom from physical disease.” The answer would be yes. The tree is sound and shows no sign of disease. However, the plant may not be healthy for the other plants or your landscape. Healthy buckthorn can have some very unhealthy affects on other plants that may even lead to death of other plants.

We are in the business of keeping trees and people healthy. A healthy tree in a park, yard, or along the city streets has great impact on the health of the community around it. The same holds true that if there are unhealthy trees or no trees, the community could also be considered unhealthy.

So, that leads me to this question: Are the people caring for our trees healthy? Not many of us can say that we are free from physical disease or pain. We all work with our bodies on a daily basis, whether it is raking, climbing or doing plant health care. It takes a toll on our bodies. What

about our minds? Do you have a healthy respect for heights, the equipment we use or even your co-workers? Most of us fall short in one, or maybe all, of these areas. Just as trees affect the health of the plants and people around them, we affect the health of our co-workers and our companies.

If we have unhealthy relationships with co-workers or are careless on the job, we can directly affect the health of the crew or company we are working with.

Tree health and human health have great impact on each other, sometimes in a negative way, but let's hope that it is mostly positive. We are paid to take care of the trees and we often forget about our own health and how that will affect our job of taking care of trees. So, keep all your limbs, crown and trunk healthy even if they don't have leaves.

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