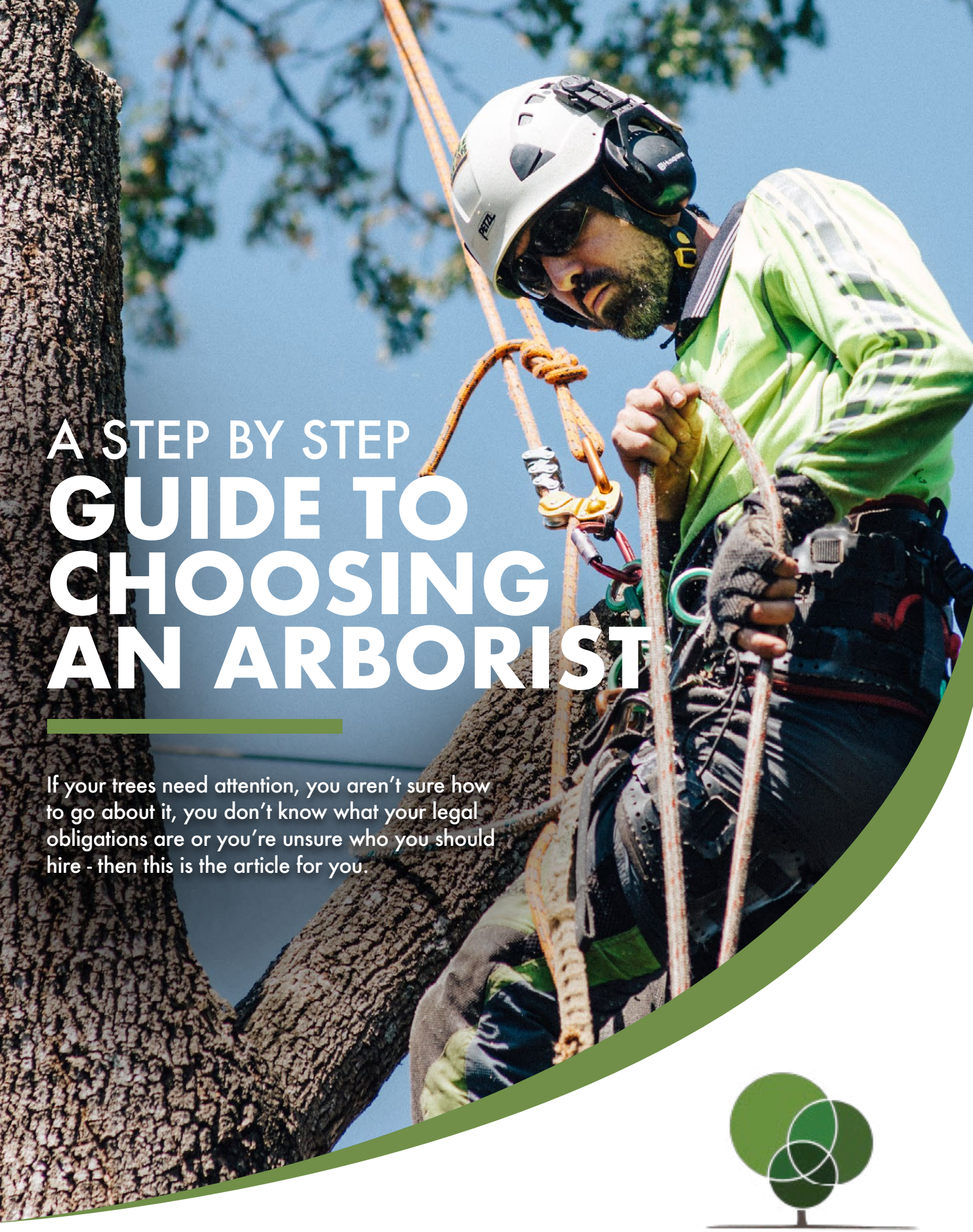

A STEP BY STEP

GUIDE TO CHOOSING AN ARBORIST

If your trees need attention, you aren't sure how to go about it, you don't know what your legal obligations are or you're unsure who you should hire - then this is the article for you.

EDEN TREES

ARBORICULTURE SERVICES

1 WHAT IS THE REAL ISSUE?

Be empowered at the beginning of the process.

Though sometimes it is obvious what the issues are, often there is more to it. Trees are large living structures that are complex and require a trained eye to see best what is going on. Trees are assets when adequately cared for. Sometimes what appears to be the problem isn't always the issue. Identifying what the REAL concern is paramount. With the right information at the start, you can save yourself time, heartache and ultimately money by getting to the source of the issue and the subsequent options to solve it. An expert arborist takes into consideration many aspects while assessing the REAL issues. Whether it is identifying the type of tree, the common traits (roots, growth, potential size when mature, health and structural integrity), the position on the property in relation to your house, soil conditions, whether the tree will block gutters and pipes, even views; or if your trees are exposed or protected from strong winds and storms.

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2

TREE LOPPER VS ARBORIST

What is the difference?

Many people may not know this, but your standard "Tree Lopper" is not required to hold any formal qualifications to carry out tree services in Queensland... Yep, this is certainly something you should be aware of as pretty much anyone with a chainsaw could legally provide you tree services. Needless to say, a Tree Lopper can do a lot of lasting damage to your valuable trees within a short space of time.

So what is the difference between a Qualified Arborist and a regular Tree Lopper?

Tree Lopper

The "tree lopper" has probably worked as a labourer on a crew in the past, for several years. They have picked up enough knowledge to tackle small to medium size projects with a low degree of confidence. In many cases, they will not have the funding to purchase or maintain modern equipment, will not be able to present you with current public liability insurance, will not have workers comp, will not have his vehicles and equipment insured and will most likely (but not always) have a cheaper quote. This is because they have no formal education on tree management, this could lead to **INCORRECT** advice relating to your tree situation and the solutions and practice they offer.

Qualified Arborist

A fully qualified arborist holds a minimum AQF Cert 3 Arboriculture (National Course Code: AHC30816) where he has not only had the experience of spending many years on a tree service team but also holds formal training in all aspects of dismantling trees safely and arboricultural knowledge relating to species and condition of your trees. The Cert 3 Arborist can provide you with extensive expertise with accurate advice about your needs

An Arborist should be able to present the following on request:

- Current Public Liability Insurance Certificate
- Workers Comp documents
- Vehicles and equipment insurance papers
- QF Cert 3 Arboriculture

You should also look for the following:

- Condition of the worker's equipment
- Online reviews, Facebook, google my business, yelp.
- Check their website and social page for proof of previous works, testimonials etc.

3 SEEK COUNCIL APPROVAL

It pays to Check

Once the real issue has been identified. Council approval is the next step - In South East QLD the Council's there have differing regulations on what the property owners can and can't do with their trees.

Information can be found by calling your local council or clicking the appropriate link below. Here you will find what trees are exempt from vegetation protection orders and do not require approval. For all protected vegetation (trees) you will need to submit an application to your local council before any work takes place.

Brisbane Council
Logan City Council
Redland City Council
Gold Coast City Council
Moreton Bay Council
Ipswich City Council
Scenic Rim Regional Council

Here are some examples of reasons for removing trees on private property:

- Dead trees
- Dangerous / Hazardous trees
- Branches falling
- Diseased Trees
- Weed Trees (some councils have a list of these trees that can be removed)
- Significant damage to propertyDA Approved
- building plans

The reasons below are generally unfit for tree removal:

- Tree(s) reaching over the house, powerlines, pool
- or children's play area
- Trees blocking a view
- Falling debris, leaves, dead branches and leaves.
- Shade issues made by trees
- Trees planted by you
- Exotic trees

Development Application:
If the tree(s) are being removed to support a development you would need to specify this on your application and usually submit supporting evidence that there is no other way for the development to proceed without removing the trees. This would be done using a AQF Cert 5 Consulting Arborist who will provide you with an Arborist Report.

4 PROVIDE WRITTEN QUOTE

The written word endures, while the spoken disappears

Obtaining a detailed written quote may seem the obvious outcome with most trades people, but very often the unprofessional "tree lopper" will give you a verbal quote based from a brief discussion, that may have left out some important details. Furthermore, they may say half-way through the job that certain things were not included (Green waste removal for example) and try to charge you extra halfway through the job. Or not carry out the work to your intended desire. The reality is it takes effort and understanding to provide a detailed written quote so everyone is on the same page.

Company ABN number. Addressed to the right person and job address correct.

ABN: 53 375 688 361

QUOTE

To: Mr Treekeeper
99 Ironbark Way, Tree Tops Village.

Company letter head. Date and length that quote is valid. Quote Number for reference.

Quotation Date: 4/02/2020
Quote Number: 1611
Valid: 30 Days

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Detailed description of the work to be carried out. Including the type of tree and location, Any exclusions should be in additional notes. The prices should be broken down if necessary.

Item Description	Unit Price	Qty	Total Incl GST
1 x Large Eucalyptus tree located in rear near boundary fence. Tree is dead. Perform advanced takedown and removal. Stump to be ground 150mm below ground level. 1 x Large Eucalyptus tree located right of dead tree. Perform technical climb and trim of damaged branches back to collar. See photo. All debris, branches and log to be removed from property. Site to be left clean and tidy.	$2,500.00	1	**$2,500.00**

Additional Notes:

Payment Options with details. Company contact details.

Payment Options

By credit card
To pay via MasterCard or VISA.
Phone our office on 0411511127.
Quote Ref: 1611

By direct deposit
Account Name: Eden Trees Arboriculture Services P/L
BSB:
Account No:
When depositing funds please use reference 1611

Payment Terms: Casual Customers - Prepaid or COD Account Customers - 7 days net from date of invoice

Mob: 0411 511 127
Ph: 07 5547 0934
Monday to Friday
8 am to 5 pm

1322 Chambers Flat
Chambers Flat QLD 4133

www.edentrees.com.au
phil@edentrees.com.au

Cost breakdown including and excluding GST and providing a total due.

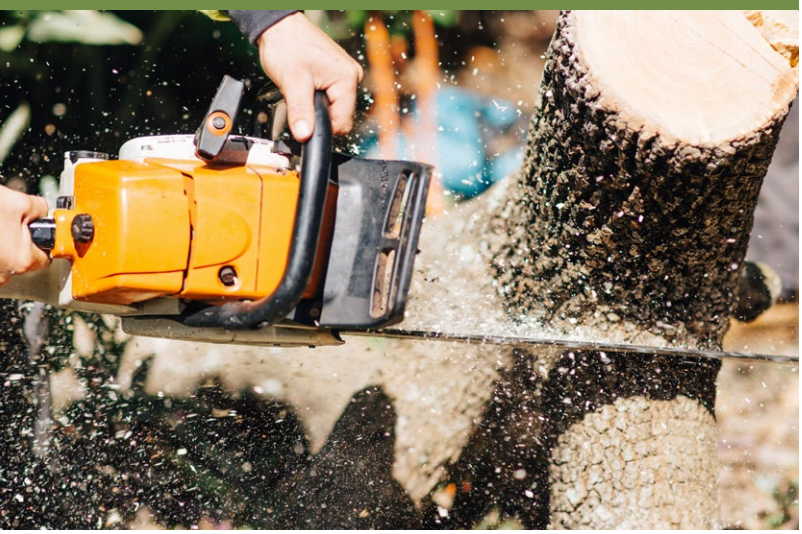
TOTAL Excl GST	$2,272.73
GST	$227.27
TOTAL DUE:	$2,500.00

4a

EXAMPLE: MARKED PHOTOS CAN BE USED TO DEMONSTRATE THE QUOTE DESCRIPTION

5 MODERN AND MAINTAINED EQUIPMENT

Right Tool for the Right Job



Professional tree service companies invest hundreds of thousands of dollars to acquire the right equipment to safely and efficiently work with your trees. This machinery requires very high ongoing maintenance costs. This critically important part of the service as all machinery and tools work hard and needs to be maintained at the highest level. From ropes, slings and pulleys right up to large wood chippers, mini loaders, stump grinders and trucks, every component play a vital role in safely and professionally pruning and removing trees.

A poorly maintained harness could see a worker fall from a tree, likewise poorly maintained ropes and slings could see a large branch smash through a roof, a car or damage other structures below.

When you get your tree work quotes, be sure to know that a suspect tree lopper with an unusually low quote is probably skimping on maintenance costs somewhere along the line and this is just another element of risk you should take into consideration before choosing your tree service provider. Check your providers' recent social posts and other web media to try to get a feel if they are using modern, well-maintained equipment or if it is dated and looks dangerous.

6 SAFETY AND INSURANCE

For your Peace of Mind

As you can imagine, the tree service industry is considered dangerous when you think of all the things that could go wrong. Branches and tree trunks are extremely heavy, often weighing many tons and only experienced arborists know how to bring them to the ground safely. Often there is more than one technique that could be used to bring down a tree, and you will find the arborist with the much cheaper quote may be sacrificing the safer method for the faster way to save time and money. Usually, the more reliable process will take a little more time or require the use of heavy equipment such as cranes, cherry pickers etc. All of which add money to a quote. On the flip side, paying a little extra to have the job done right may avoid more considerable costs such as getting a branch through a roof, damage to your driveway or even worse personal injury resulting from negligence. The sad reality is people have died from having tree work carried out at their properties, both the property owners and tree workers. **This should never happen.** The industry standards and training are in place, so it does not.

Professional arborists are passionate about keeping their crews and the public safe and the Urban Forest healthy and flourishing. Safety is paramount in our industry as the risks are high. Crew supervisors are trained and required to go through a detailed safety audit process upon arrival to a job, then having all staff briefed and made aware of any potential risks, as well as having all staff sign off before commencing any physical work. Weekly safety meetings that all staff are required to attend is common practice, where discussions on any potential risks that may have presented through the week and how they can be mitigated in future. The massive contrast between the professional Tree Service Company and the untrained Tree Lopper is ever increasing.

The following identifies what the insurances are and why they are important:

MAKE SURE YOU ASK TO SEE THE CERTIFICATE OF CURRENCY OF THE ARBORIST!

Public Liability 20 Million – This will cover any unforeseen issues that may occur on your property such as a tree falling on your house.

Professional Indemnity Insurance - Only required for Consultancy and Arborist Reports.

Workers Compensation – This ensures the workers doing the job are protected in the event of an accident or malpractice. Workers comp is calculated as a percentage of wages.

Vehicles & Equipment – If a Vehicle, Wood Chipper, Crane, Cherry Picker or something similar did not have 3rd party property protection and accidentally caused damage to your property, you may not be protected.

SAFETY IS IMPORTANT!

7

TESTIMONIALS & REFERENCES

What are other people saying?

In this day and age Testimonials and references are a normal part of life. Like checking out a movie on Rotten Tomatoes before watching it or reading through some Google My Business reviews before choosing a Restaurant.

Well, the tree industry is no different. A reputable Tree company will have plenty of positive reviews and testimonies on both their website and online platforms, like, GMB (Google My Business), Facebook and Yelp. Social proof is a great way to help build trust. Check out the Company's Website.

Company Website: Here you should find certificates of currency, qualifications, insurance documents etc. You should also see plenty of images showing previous jobs, and previous customer tesitominals.

Google Reviews: This is a wonderful source of reviews as customers must be personally logged into their google accounts independently to leave a review. This means the result cannot be manipulated easily by the tree company giving you a less biased result. People are usually pretty lazy or find it difficult to leave google reviews, so many times you will not see a great deal of reviews on a tree company, but if people get bad service they become more motivated to leave a bad review. Knowing this, if you see a google tree business page with plenty reviews and very high ratings, you have a good chance that they are a reputable provider.

Facebook page: A great palce to see images of the company at work doing similar work and see other customer reviews.

ABN Look Up: Check out there ABN to verify the company has not liquidated by using the ABN online

Yelp Reviews: These reviews work similar to google my business reviews but on a different platform. Users must have an account and be logged in to leave a review. The only downside with yelp is you may see minimal reviews as it is not as popular as google my business.

Some other places you could look for verification if available are **Word of Mouth Twitter, Instagram,** are they a member of 3rd party certifier organisations such as Arborculture Australia, **Google search "xxTreecompany + Reviews". lookup.**