

Tree pruning: Forest dept to prescribe the right way

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Chandigarh: In a bid to promote tree health and curb the increasing incidence of tree falling during high winds, the UT forest department will come up with a tree pruning policy, which will lay down in detail the standard operating procedure (SOP) to be followed by the UT and MC engineering departments while pruning trees.

“Pruning a tree is very technical work and should be done scientifically. In the past, we have observed that in some cases it is done haphazardly, and causes damage to the tree. There is growth of disease-causing microbes on the pruned branch, which negatively impacts the tree’s health and makes it weak. When

strong winds blow or even otherwise, the tree becomes susceptible to falling. This has caused damage to life and property in the city,” said an official.

The SOP will aim to rectify this situation, claim the officials. “It will prescribe the season for pruning different trees. Like some trees are best pruned during autumn or some before the monsoons. Prescribing the seasons for pruning particular trees will allow the departments to focus on a type of tree variety depending up on the season,” said the official.

The technique for pruning trees will also be prescribed. “Depending up on the variety of the tree, the pruning technique varies. We will be issuing instructions for this. The MC and UT engineering department then can train

their staff concerned into these techniques,” said the official.

The department will finalise a draft and it will be discussed with different stakeholders for finalisation. “The stakeholders departments, MC and UT engineering department, subject experts, non-government organisations working in the field, and general public will be taken on board before the policy is notified. We expect the policy to be ready for implementation by the year-end,” said the official.

The move comes after observations made by the department that indicate incorrect pruning by these departments can be a key factor leading to diseases in trees ultimately weakening the trees, which in turn leads trees to fall during strong winds. In recent years, a large number of trees have fallen, causing human and material losses in different parts of the city.

Why tree pruning SOP?

On July 8 last year, a Class X student was killed and 18 others injured after a 250-year-old heritage tree fell on them at Carmel Convent School in Sector 9. After the incident, the administration on July 22 had come up with a detailed order on tree felling, covering both dead/dry and green trees.