



THE WONDER OF TREES SIGNS TO WATCH & RECOVERY TIPS

by Betty Bailey

[Harris County Master Gardeners](#)

This Trees are the oldest living organisms on earth. In Utah, an Aspen tree, dubbed Pando, is estimated to be at least 80,000 years old. The Angel Oak, that recently survived hurricane Florence is the oldest living tree east of the Mississippi.

Both have weathered the challenges of hurricanes and drought, yet still stand tall.

In our Houston climate, trees survive harsh and variable weather. Sometimes a tree struggles, especially after hurricanes such as Harvey, or the recent prolonged rains.

Homeowners may think their tree is a "goner" and wonder if their tree will live or can be saved. Trees are resilient and will recover from nature's most extreme weather events.

Tree recovery tips and what to consider:



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- Does the tree have 50% of it's branches and leaves intact? Is it growing new foliage to ensure its recovery?
- If debris and mulch has mounded and surrounded a tree, rake it back to allow the tree to breath and dry out
- High winds can wind-burn a tree causing brown foliage. Look for new green leaves which are a sign of recovery
- Leaning trees, that are 4-5 inches wide with intact roots, can be up righted and anchored using stakes and "guy" wires
- Mud smothers. Use a hose to wash off mud allowing the tree to breathe and renew
- Leaves turning yellow at the top of the tree or the ends of branches are a distress sign and time to call a certified arborist
- Call a certified arborist for removal of high placed dead branches or if the tree has a split trunk or leaves continue to turn yellow.

Healthy trees encourage healthy lives by:

- Providing shade that cools the air by 2%
- Reducing soil erosion
- Improving air quality by absorbing greenhouse gases
- Being a shelter and home for wildlife
- Providing food for people and pollinators.

Whether you are treating a damaged tree or replacing a tree from Hurricane Harvey you are keeping Houston green and vigorous. The benefits of trees are endless. Trees clean our air and water and feed the human soul with their splendor. Each new tree planted is one more step to create beauty in your landscape and one more step for healthy lives.