



Alamosa Trees *by Marilyn Loser*

Pruners Get Hands-on Experience

Pruning Workshop held April 19, 2011

More than 25 people contemplated trees and discussed how to effectively and safely prune them during the field session of the recent Pruning Workshop. After a morning indoor presentation, Vince Urbina, Colorado State Forester, gave everyone the opportunity to use by-pass pruners or a pruning saw on the trees near the Alamosa Ranch Ramada picnic area east of Cattails Golf course.



Audrey Liu serves up a sustaining lunch of meatloaf sandwiches and local greens before pruners head into the field.



Deciding which of the leaders should remain as the dominate leader. Structure pruning may take more than one year.



Looking through a maze of branches, Vince Urbina shows where he'd make a cut.

For the workshop, Urbina worked from the ground on small- to medium-sized trees. He emphasized knowing why you're pruning and to never remove more than 25% of the tree canopy in a year.

Once a tree is established (usually 2-3 years after planting), it's time to begin routine pruning maintenance. Structural pruning for most shade trees involves establishing a dominant leader. It's also important to realize that branches less than 8 ft. from the ground are considered temporary branches and are usually removed as the tree matures and has established branches higher up.



Lisa ter Kuile gets down and makes an appropriate cut near the tree base while Urbina supervises.



JD Prentice makes the third cut on a branch. The first two cuts take the weight off the limb.

The Alamosa Tree Board and Colorado State Forest Service sponsored the workshop. Audrey Liu and Jan Oen, Alamosa Tree Board members, provided the wonderful lunch that included donated Kretsinger (KW Farms) beef and salad greens from the Alamosa Community Greenhouse. The Green Spot donated coffee.

Photos by Marilyn Loser