



**Governor's Office of
Homeland Security &
Emergency Preparedness**

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 30, 2012

Strain: Hire only licensed arborists to work on storm-damaged trees

Baton Rouge, La. - Once wind and rain die down from Hurricane Isaac the cleanup begins, and Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., is reminding residents to hire only professional-licensed arborists to perform work on storm-damaged trees.

"Anyone doing tree work in Louisiana is required to obtain a license through the LDAF," Strain said. "Hiring only licensed-professional arborists protects you, the homeowner, since licensed arborists are not only trained to properly execute tree work, but they must also maintain liability insurance. I also urge you to get a written estimate and, while you may be required to pay a reasonable deposit, you should never pay for the job in full up front."

"Following hurricanes, we see an increased number of people going door-to-door offering tree services," Strain said. "When hiring an arborist to remove storm-damaged trees, always ask to see their license and a current copy of the arborist's liability insurance certificate."

According to the Louisiana horticulture law: No person shall receive fees, advertise or solicit business in a regulated profession or occupation unless this person holds the appropriate license or permit, or has a regular employee who holds the appropriate license or permit, or is employed by a person who holds the appropriate license or permit. In addition, all licensees are required to place their license numbers on all business-related vehicles that have advertisements on them.

No license is required for persons doing tree debris removal, which includes cutting up and hauling away fallen trees.

Strain added, "Any work on a tree or portion of a tree still standing will require an arborist license."

A list of people licensed to do arborist work in Louisiana may be obtained from the LDAF website at www.LDAF.la.gov, or by calling 225-952-8100.

###