

A letter from TFW member Joel Hencken to Lucas Trees, with a copy to the Watertown Tab&Press (published June 25, 2010, page 10, Letters section)

Dear Sirs:

I live in Watertown, Mass. NSTAR has hired your company to "prune" our trees.

Yesterday I walked my dog down Walnut Street from Mt. Auburn Street to where it ends at School Street, and it was a totally depressing experience. There were several sycamore trees which have had some dead branches, and which mildly interacted with some of the NSTAR wires. These ended up shaped bizarrely, but they weren't in great shape to begin with.

But then there was a stand of three healthy fifty-year old maples which were simply butchered. One was hacked almost in half, leaving an unbalanced and unhealthy tree, others misshapen and still not clearing the wires they were presumably hacked up to make a clearance.

Watertown is not especially pretty architecturally, but its remaining old trees give us at least some beauty and some protection from the summer sun. I'm terrified you are going to ruin the beautiful street I live on, which has wires that go through intact trees without any problems in storms. I now live in dread that I'll come home from work and see my street ruined. Trees of age 50+ take that long to be beautiful, shady, and oxygen-producing.

This so-called pruning is literally killing many of them, and making the others so ugly they might as well be removed.

And the wires in Watertown are significantly uglier than absolutely necessary; they need to be covered up.

I gather your "mandate" is to clear branches from wires, but are you not arborists?

Do you hate trees, while needing to serve the interests of power and communications companies? Surely someone in your large company actually likes trees - or at least appreciates their commercial value (you are ruining our property values when you wreck our trees) - and surely someone there was actually trained to prune a tree in order to assist the tree to grow and be healthy. The people who did the hack job on Walnut Street are vandals, not arborists. Surely you can do better in finding some balance between the wires and the people who live here and need our trees.

Please, please stop ruining our neighborhood!

And please have someone respond to this email, sooner rather than later!

Joel Hencken
Geoffrey Fine
Lincoln Street