Arborist says most recover after storm.

If you’re itching to crank up your chain saw, think twice.

That advice comes from certified arborist Jeff Kennedy who is also a member of the Gothenburg Tree Board.

“Clean up your lawn and sidewalk but don’t cut off branches unless it’s a safety hazard,” Kennedy said. “Wait and see what to do. Some trees that are bent over may come out of it and some may need to be pruned.”

Kennedy was referring to the hundreds of branches littering streets and yards following a foot of heavy snow that fell on the city last Friday.

Most important, he said, is to not top or improperly cut branches from trees.

“Corrective pruning may be needed,” Kennedy said, “but wait and see.”

Because of a city ordinance, trees on city right way cannot be topped.

Improper cutting, Kennedy explained, causes growing to not properly attach to the tree.

“Then if there’s a windstorm or heavy snow, branches are lying all over and it’s a big hazard,” he said.

Between now and February is a good time to prune if it’s needed, Kennedy said.

If property owners are unsure whether pruning is needed or a tree is dead, he said they need to call a certified arborist.

“Once you cut it down, you can’t change your mind,” Kennedy said.

The storm last week is also a reminder that some species hold up better during adverse weather than others.

“Generally if there’s a storm in Gothenburg, we end up with a lot of branches from silver maples,” Kennedy said. “That costs the city to clean up if it’s a street tree.”

Street trees grow in city right of way which is between the sidewalk and curb.

As a result, he said property owners should consider planting good quality trees like oaks.

Until the ground freezes, Kennedy said trees can still be planted.

For more information about recovery tips for trees or trees in general, visit The National Arbor Day Foundation at www.arborday.org or the Nebraska Forest Service at www.nfs.unl.edu.

Gothenburg’s Tree Board also has a list at city hall of quality trees members recommend for

planting.

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