

Hurricanes have taught us a lesson. No tree can be guaranteed to stand up to hurricane force winds. Though there are tree species that can stand up to strong winds much better than others. Select strong wind resilient trees such as live oak, ironwood, tamarind, magnolia, sapodilla and sabal palms. Stay away from adding trees to your landscape that are noted for dropping large branches or splitting apart under stress. Norfolk Island pine, Silver Trumpet tree-*Tabebuia caraiba*, Jacaranda, Royal Poinciana are some of the trees that can lose major limbs during a windstorm.

Planting considerations include choosing small trees to shade the east and west walls of the house using trees as Fiddlewood-*Citharexylum fruticosum*, Lignumvitae-*Guaiaacum santum* and Stopper trees-*Eugenia spp.* A small tree planted fairly close to a house would be much less hazardous than larger shade trees that can turn to wreckers in a storm. Overhead utility lines are even more vulnerable to damage than the roof or windows of a house. There should be no tree branches close enough to drop across overhead wires or even brush against them.

A wind resilient tree is the result of regular care since its early life. Trees should not be cut back to make them bushy, but should be encouraged to form a strong leader with a well spaced framework of lateral branches. Faced with the threat of another storm, gardeners who have kept their trees thinned with a canopy in proportion to the trunk and branches have little extra plant maintenance to do. The overgrown neglected tree is another matter. For information on selecting shade trees for your yard contact the Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener Volunteer hotline Monday-Friday (except for observed holidays) 9am-4pm 233-1750.



Figure 1 Norfolk Island pine not recommended planted close to a house