

# *Borough of Franklin Lakes*

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## **Hurricane Sandy Storm Assessment - October 29 and 30, 2012**

November 1, 2012

Hurricane Sandy's winds began gusting to high speeds on Monday afternoon. The gusts continued into Tuesday. When the gusts subsided, there was tremendous damage caused by falling trees. Many trees hit power lines, causing power failures thru out Franklin Lakes. There were approximately 28 homes with damage, caused by falling trees.

A random survey of the fallen trees was conducted on November 1, 2012. Some of the trees that had hit houses were inspected and some trees that fell on power lines and roadways were also inspected.

It seems as though approximately 60% of the trees that went down were oak trees. Approximately 30% were conifers, pines, spruces and cedars.

Approximately 90% of the fallen trees were blown over with the roots still intact; half of the root system is above ground. On most of these trees, there was no evidence of defects in the tree that would indicate that the tree had a potential problem. If, there was a group of fallen trees, most of the trees that had fallen, fell parallel to each other, indicating that one gust had most likely been responsible pushing the trees over. Some of the trees were in lawn areas; there is the possibility that the roots had declined due to competition with the grass roots. Generally, trees win the competition with the grass.

Some trees were near the edge of an impervious surface, such as a driveway, walkway or a road. One large red maple was only 1 foot away from a road. It would be expected that the tree would fall away from the road due to the part of the root system that was compromised by road, and the lack of air and water.

Approximately 10% of the trees, fell without the root system being ripped out. Many of these trees showed signs of internal decay, which weakened the wood and caused the failure. The trunks of the trees snapped off, above ground. Several of the trees did just snap off without any defects as evidence.

Although we did not get a direct hit by the storm, it did cause extraordinary damage to otherwise healthy trees, the **hundred year storm**.