



ENVIRONMENTAL FACT SHEET:

## The importance of keeping tree snags and downed wood



Dead trees are a very important component of a healthy woodland. While some people might think dead wood is "unsightly," dead trees actually provide even more habitat than live trees for many kinds of wildlife. If you are fortunate to have snags with natural cavities in your yard, please leave them for wildlife homes. Cavity nesting birds such as wood ducks, chickadees, woodpeckers and owls and mammals such as flying squirrels and bats all depend upon the cavities for dens and nesting structures. Dead trees and wood are home to many invertebrates that in turn become food for other forest animals that require a rich prey base to successfully raise young.

Downed logs are also part of a healthy forest. Many kinds of animals such as salamanders, frogs and woodland deer mice need the cover, shade, and moisture that downed logs provide. Even fireflies need decaying logs to survive! A decomposing log stores much needed moisture and recycles essential nutrients that enrich the soil of the forest floor, benefiting your other trees and shrubs.

So, unless a dead tree is a hazard to your house, please consider keeping most, if not all the tree, for the wildlife that shares your neighborhood. Remember, a "neat" woodland does not mean a healthy woodland! Medina residents are fortunate to still have natural places to enjoy abundant wildlife not far from a major metropolitan area. Our own backyards can play a significant role in conservation by providing diverse habitat for our native wildlife.