
ETRAC Update

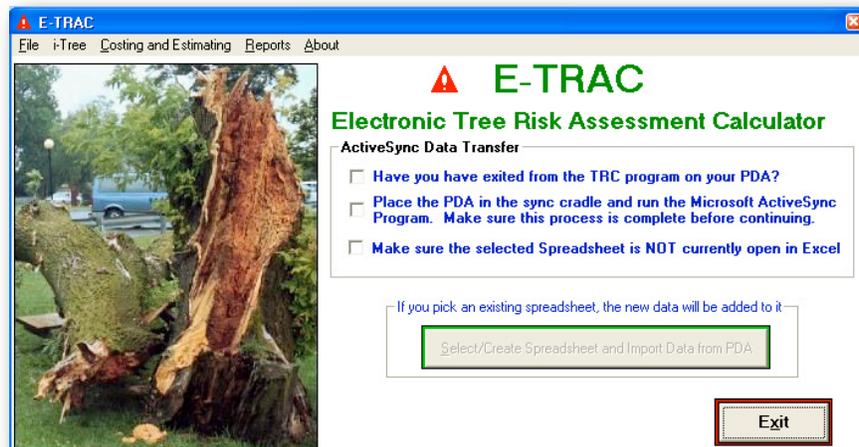
Electronic Tree Risk Assessment Calculator

INFORMATIONAL BRIEF

VER. 2.0, MAY 3, 2007

Background

The Electronic Tree Risk Assessment Calculator (ETRAC) software provides a valuable addition to the Risk Tree Management initiative developed by the US Forest Service, and its development is the direct result of requests from state and municipal users in the Northeast. Developed by the Forest Service's Northeastern Area, in cooperation with the Centers for Urban & Community Forestry, and the Urban Natural Resource Institute, ETRAC was introduced as a valuable tool to record the potential risk of trees in the urban landscape. Several revisions to the computer software, which contains a desktop component and a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) tool, have been made over the past several years.



The ETRAC software tools enable the seamless transfer of field data collected via a PDA, into the Desktop PC interface and estimating engine.

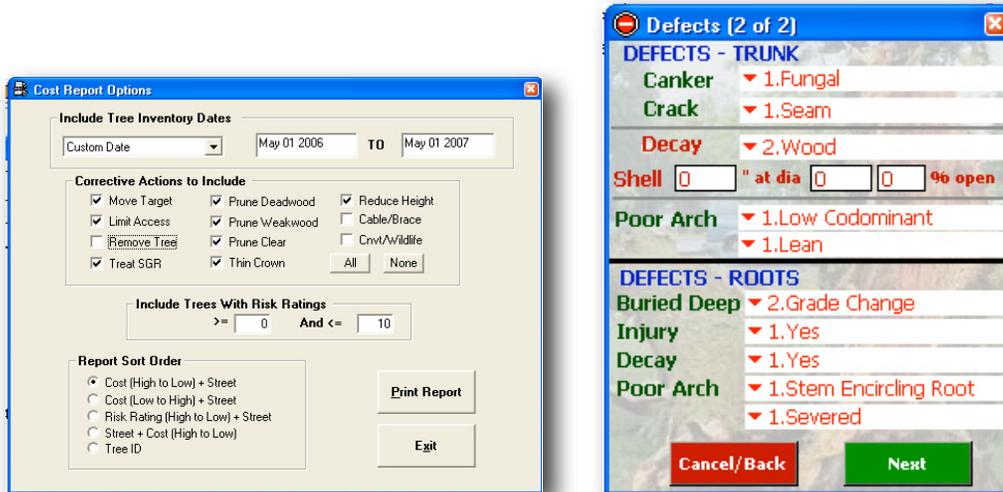
ETRAC supports the book "Urban Tree Risk Management: A Community Guide to Program Design and Implementation." It provides an avenue for the community tree risk management tools, training, and resources that were developed by the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area to be used to the fullest extent.

Using the ETRAC software the user can seamlessly collect data in the field and upload it to a database on a personal computer. ETRAC is accessible and customizable to help communities better manage their community tree risk and find reasonable methods to address an oftentimes overwhelming safety and financial burden.

Development Stage - May, 2007

This desktop-based information asset manager program (ETRAC) will provide a low-cost, easy to use method not only for assessing public tree risk, but also for estimating management costs based on user defined criteria. The software and users manual will be available at no cost to users, and can downloaded via the internet.

This latest version contains many new additions that make the software more customizable to the individual user, as well as includes an estimating engine for the calculation of costs associated with the elimination of specific risk tree situations.



The ETRAC Desktop PC interface and PDA screens allow for customization and cost reporting based on local estimates, and offer a wide range of field observation criteria and reporting options.

In addition to logistical and graphic changes, the software is simpler to install on the desktop PC and the PDA interface is more user friendly. The configuration screens for the software have been modified to include a variety of user configurable settings.

Next Steps

It is anticipated that during the Summer 2007, several communities and agencies will cooperate in field testing of the ETRAC software products. If you are willing to become part of this Beta testing team, please contact Donna Murphy, Mid-Atlantic Center for U&CF at dmmurphy@fs.fed.us, or Jill Johnson, Midwest Center for U&CF at jill.johnson@fs.fed.us

A September release of Version 1.0 of the software is planned, based on user feedback and revision timelines. Please consider becoming part of this exciting initiative through distribution through your distribution networks.

The release version of the ETRAC software will be available, in September, 2007, at the following websites:

<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/urban/inforesources/treelink>

or

<http://www.unri.org/etrac>