



USER

Gollnick & Sons Tree Service

LOCATION

Cedarburg, WI

FOUNDERS

James R. Gollnick
Andrew Gollnick

SERVICES

- Plant Health Care (PHC)
- Pruning, Cabling & Removals
- Stump Grinding
- Wood Chips & Firewood
- Live Edge Wood Slabs

WEBSITE

<https://gollnickandsonstreeservice.com/>



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Arborist Takes Milwaukee® Battery-Powered Solutions to New Heights

Andrew Gollnick of Gollnick & Sons Tree Service leverages Milwaukee's growing array of tree-care solutions to boost crew performance and productivity, as the company strives to transition away from gas to battery-powered tools.

CEDARBURG, WISCONSIN — Growing up, Andrew Gollnick loved climbing trees and as an adult, two decades later, this passion shaped his career. A member of the Wisconsin Arborist Association, he has won the group's annual tree climbing championship an incredible four times, with this expertise extending beyond sport. He is a senior manager at Gollnick & Sons Tree Service LLC in Cedarburg, Wisconsin. Established by his father in August 2003, the company now employs 12 people and serves private property owners and municipalities, offering a range of tree care services — from seasonal pruning and tree cabling to removal and stump grinding.

Gollnick's journey began in high school, working summers in the family business. He later pursued an associate's degree in arboriculture and horticulture where he took courses in climbing, rigging, pruning, and removing trees. "I learned all the basics in a safe, comfortable, supportive setting."

After gaining experience with another company in Madison, Wisconsin, Gollnick returned to Cedarburg in 2016 to rejoin the family business. "Dad does all the sales," says Gollnick of their current arrangement, "while I help by leading one of our crews. We have two or three in the field daily, doing production, pruning and removal."

Dedicated to Excellence

But Andrew does much more than "help." Gollnick is a dedicated arborist who has worked hard to extend and deepen his professional skills. With 16 years of field experience, he is a Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP) through the Tree Care Industry Association. "The CTSP accreditation is the only individual safety credentialing program in the tree-care industry," he notes. He also holds the ISA Certified Arborist® credential from the International Society of Arboriculture.

For Gollnick, continuing education and driving awareness of the profession is crucial. "When you tell someone, 'I'm an arborist,' half the time they don't know what that means," he comments. "The fact is, tree care is a skilled job that requires more than just swinging a chainsaw around. Trees are living things that need specialized care. There's research and proper techniques, for example, on how to sustain and take care of large heritage trees."

Gollnick's dedication to lifelong learning ensures his skills remain current with advancements in tree care. "Tree-care professionals take courses to learn how to cut trees down safely," he says. "We aim to protect ourselves and do what's best for the tree, whether it's plant health care treatments or cabling large branches that pose risks to property."

Battery-Powered Benefits

An essential part of Gollnick's commitment to his profession is keeping pace with industry product innovations.

Few are more consequential in the tree care industry than the emergence of professional battery powered saws.

Professional arborists who spend their days high above ground wrangling with trees welcome any innovation that makes their sometimes-precarious tasks easier and safer, according to Gollnick. "When an arborist is up in a tree, they need the saw to do the cut," he explains. "If that saw can be lighter, easier to start, able to operate efficiently with a run time that spans an entire day, that's an innovation definitely worth embracing." All those attributes describe the rising popularity of battery-powered Outdoor Power Equipment.



The steady transition at Gollnick & Sons from gas to battery-powered outdoor equipment has delivered all the much-anticipated benefits: no more pull starts, reduced noise and zero emissions, and none of the maintenance headaches that are routine to gas-equipment users.

Andrew especially appreciates the reduction in tool vibration. "If you're cutting trees out of a bucket truck all day, day after day, that's a lot of starting and stopping the saw and a lot of vibration. I think there are negative effects for the crews, long-term."

"Battery-powered saws still vibrate while making the cut, but not as much," he continues. "The improved ergonomics are really helpful, contributing to worker longevity and reduced carpal tunnel problems."

The lower noise levels also play a massive role in improving the efficiency of the arborist's job, according to Andrew. "We still use hearing protection with the battery tools, but they are not as high-pitched as some gas saws. You can hear people a bit more clearly. In addition, if we must work late at night or early in the morning, it's a plus not having a loud chainsaw."

Gollnick & Sons' part of the country experiences both kinds of weather extremes: icy-cold arctic winters and witheringly hot and humid summers. The battery tools have proven to be up to both climate challenges.

"On hot days, the fuel inside gas saws can experience vapor locking, especially if the tool sits too long in the sun," Andrew comments. "You have to let it cool off before starting it."

There are no such issues for battery tools in the summer; likewise, at the opposite end of the year.

"Last winter, we had single-digit weather, and the electric tools were not having a problem keeping up."

Understanding the benefits of battery power on the job site, Andrew knew he needed the best tools available.



Working with Milwaukee

Andrew first became involved as a field tester in 2016 for Milwaukee Tool, which was beginning to explore how to broaden its lineup of high-performing chainsaw solutions for the tree care professional. At that time, Andrew was already a seasoned, satisfied user of the brand's smaller power tools, such as grease guns and impact drivers. A few years later, when Milwaukee came to him with a new battery-powered, top-handle chainsaw, he was eager to try it while offering suggestions for improvements.

Shortly afterward, Andrew was introduced to Milwaukee's M18 FUEL™ HATCHET™ 8" Pruning Saw.

"That's when things started to really get exciting," recalls Gollnick, who enthusiastically describes the product as a "game changer" for tree pruning.

Milwaukee's Innovative Solutions

The company's investment in Milwaukee Tool Outdoor Power Equipment solutions for the tree care industry has steadily expanded over the years, particularly with the introduction of REDLITHIUM™ FORGE™ — currently Milwaukee's most powerful, fastest-charging, and longest-lasting battery.

"When we began using the M18™ FORGE™ XC8.0," Andrew comments, "it was definitely the professional kind of experience we needed and were hoping for regarding reduced battery weight and overheating. He also appreciates the ability to deploy a single battery and charging platform for all his battery-powered equipment:

"At the end of the day, it's all the same fuel because the M12™ and M18™ batteries work for all the Milwaukee tools," he says. "If we have a cabling job where we need a drill or the grease guns, it's all the same battery, and here's the charger for that battery. It's just that simple.

"With other brands," he continues, "all that would be difficult to manage: separate chargers for separate batteries — it gets a little confusing. Tree care is already a stressful and hazardous job at times, especially for someone new to the job. I like innovation, but I also like to keep it simple."

The Gollnick & Sons' Milwaukee Tool inventory now includes rear and top-handle chainsaws, and pole saws, as well as hedgers, pruners, and handheld blowers. "There's a lot of days at work," Andrew notes "where none of the gas saws are used because I can do a large removal of a 28-inch tree with all (Milwaukee®) battery tools".

Aerial Cutting and Tight Access Pruning

"Once they started coming out with the Top Handle and the HATCHET™, the transition to Milwaukee® was easy," Andrew explains. He shares his experience with the M18 FUEL™ Top Handle: "The power that I've experienced has been amazing; it cuts through 14-inch limbs without hesitating." The integrated POWERSTATE™ Brushless Motor enables the crew to maintain speed under heavy loads, outperforming small gas engines and higher voltage systems. "With the FORGE™ XC8.0 Battery, it's definitely the professional experience you need."

The M18 FUEL™ HATCHET™ 8" Pruning Saw "has been a game changer," Andrew continues. "When pruning in tight access locations, we often aren't looking to make large cuts," he explains, "so I don't want to be lugging around a 12-inch or 14-inch top handle saw up into the tree. The HATCHET™ is lighter than a top-handle saw, so I can safely use it to prune a large tree and have plenty of



battery power left over. The longer battery run time allows me to stay in the tree and stay productive. I'm not starting and stopping like I would with a gas-powered saw."

Gollnick & Sons crews currently have five HATCHETS™. "There are a lot of miles" on all five, reports Andrew. "They are very helpful."

Extended Reach

For applications that require extended reach, the M18 FUEL™ Telescoping Pole Saw has become a reliable go-to option, Andrew attests, "we use that thing all the time." With chain speeds up to 30% faster, users are provided cleaner cuts and increased productivity. For Andrew's crew, that has translated to significant benefits in efficiency, driving faster cut speeds while also eliminating the frustrations associated with gas operated pole saws. As the saw is equipped with a POWERSTATE™ Brushless Motor to deliver up to 35% more power than leading gas competitors, this has been a great benefit noted as well, "the power is the same whether it's up close or all the way extended out."

Tree Felling

Engineered to deliver the performance required by tree care professionals, the new M18 FUEL™ 20" Dual Battery Chainsaw generates 70cc gas power. That translates into faster cutting with reduced stalls even when doing heavy-demand felling, bucking, limbing, and stump cutting. The Dual Battery Chainsaw offers arborists two modes to better control their power usage: Standard Power Mode with 4.4 horsepower to maximize run time and keep the saw running cool; and Peak Power Mode with 5.8 horsepower and 9.5 newton-meters (Nm) of peak torque to handle the most demanding hardwood cuts without stalling.

Since using this new product, Gollnick has become an avid proponent of its capabilities.

"When removing a tree from the top down, I'm taking smaller limbs down first," he explains. "Then, when removing large limbs and even the trunk — where I need a larger, longer guide bar — I use the Dual Battery Chainsaw unless I am doing cuts 28 inches and larger. Then I might switch to a gas saw to avoid chewing through batteries."

But Gollnick sees a big change coming, and soon. "Battery longevity will eventually reach a point where we will not need the gas equipment, even for the larger cuts. In fact, we are already experiencing issues with our gas supply going bad because it's just been sitting for weeks. We're just not using as much gas as we once did."

Power Anywhere

"It's great having the ROLL-ON™ because I don't have to worry about running out of batteries during the day," Andrew explains when asked how he manages battery power on the job. As the first mobile battery power supply in its class designed for professionals, Milwaukee's ROLL-ON™ Power Supply serves as a portable charging station, maintaining the ability to be charged and then leveraged to recharge batteries throughout the day in remote locations.

Andrew currently has one ROLL-ON™ that he charges overnight, along with his batteries, so he doesn't have to worry about running out of battery power during the day. The power supply, which remains on one of the company's three trucks, is equipped with two Super Chargers and one six-pack charger. His crew discharges and recharges batteries throughout the workday, relying on battery power as much as possible.

"The ROLL-ON™ routinely gets me through a full day of felling and removing trees," says Andrew, without his having to switch to gas power. This contrasts with the experience of other Gollnick crews who do not yet enjoy the advantage of a ROLL-ON™ Power Supply.

"The other crews typically use a six-pack charger with six HO [High Output] batteries," Andrew says. "Once they discharge those batteries, that's it. They switch to their gas saws. They could also go with the Dual Battery Saw, but they would run through the six batteries pretty quickly."

Of course, if a Gollnick crew is on someone's property, they could ask for permission to plug into the customer's own power supply, but "that can be an uncomfortable thing to ask," Andrew notes.

Once again, ROLL-ON™ helps Gollnick crews avoid making that awkward inquiry while allowing them to work where no other power supply is available. "If I'm going deep in the woods," Andrew says, "I'll be sure to take six batteries and ROLL-ON™ with me. They can keep up even if I am doing quite a bit of cutting. It's huge to go through a full day using only batteries."

Time for a Mindset Shift

As noted, Andrew actively participates in tree-care industry trade groups and their educational events. That exposure has given him a first-hand perspective that not everyone is on board with the move to battery power. He grasps and maybe even empathizes a bit with their reluctance.

"Maybe an arborist is making a precarious cut," he explains, "and they know they can count on the gas saw to get them through the whole cut because they have done it so many times before."

Indeed, experience is a critical factor in more ways than one. Objections like the above are most likely expressed by seasoned professionals who are not excited about switching out all their tools. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it — that's often the older generation's mentality," Andrew comments. "But the younger arborists I know are excited about what's to come."

What further innovations do Gollnick and his younger cohort anticipate? Battery-powered tools will get smaller and lighter while permitting longer run times — again, making it easier to transition away from gas equipment. Meanwhile, larger and heavier equipment will also move to battery power, delivering high performance and equally high productivity.

"As the younger generations enter the tree care field, the push for all the benefits of battery power will become more compelling, if not downright irresistible," he says. "For some battery tools, the performance levels are already there." Andrew cites the M18 FUEL™ Telescoping Pole Saw and the M18 FUEL™ HATCHET™ 8" Pruning Saw as prime examples of "clearly better right now" tools.



"For those not yet into the newer ways of doing tree care, it takes just a little bit of a mindset shift," he remarks, "a willingness to try something different. But the innovations are definitely here with much more to come."