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Great tips to get you through Cyber Monday.. In-Depth @ 12:30pm.

## Officials say two-story tree house may not be legal



Richard Hazen built this two-story tree house in an Australian pine on his Holmes Beach property.

By [Jody Lowery](#), Reporter

Last Updated: Monday, November 28, 2011

[0](#)

## **HOLMES BEACH --**

A Holmes Beach man built a tree house as a place for him to find peace.

However, city officials said Richard Hazen's wooded refuge may not be legal.

Hazen built the elaborate two-story tree house in an Australian pine to get some rest and relaxation. Before he went through with his plans, he got the okay from city officials.

But officials said the structure isn't what they had in mind when they gave approval for him to build the structure.

"I said, I don't have any objections to you building a tree house,, thinking it was something like I used to build years ago as a kid, but he sure did change it from that into a much larger situation," Holmes Beach building inspector Bob Shaffer said.

City officials said they signed off on a much smaller space, and so now they are taking a closer look at the property, which they said could potentially be a safety hazard.

"We worry about hurricanes here," Shaffer said. "You know, you got this thing blowing around and all over the place and the rules and regulations are to keep that from happening on this island."

The city plans to inspect the tree house further in the coming weeks to make sure it meets hurricane safety standards.

Officials are also consulting with the Environmental Protection Agency to make sure it meets guidelines and won't hurt protected vegetation such as sea grass and oaks.

Hazen said he had no idea his tree house could potentially become a legal problem.

"It was just to go up there, go viewing, have a glass of wine, eat my dinner, whatever," he said.

And until he's told differently, Hazen said he'll continue to enjoy life on his beachfront property from his tree house.

**One grrrrreat looking treehouse!**

2011-11-28 16:35:00

[Report this post](#) *jean wrote:* Now do you understand why all those occupy people can't come up with a joint agenda. This is a perfect example of where do you begin to start??? The Government is out of control. If it were a living organism it would eat us all alive. (If you count taxes ,I guess it is already)

**Tree House**

2011-11-28 16:14:00

[Report this post](#) *Bird wrote:*I'd like to hang out there...for a Hurricane!

**It's Stronger Than His House!!**

2011-11-28 15:37:00

[Report this post](#) *Robert Saienni wrote:*We stayed there in August, for our wedding anniversary. I spent time relaxing in, and around the structure. I have been doing construction for many years and took notice of all the hurricane proofing materials used for this project... The man even put a nail in EVERY joist hanger lol. I say: "ENOUGH ALREADY!!!". Another broke, egotistical, AND JEALOUS city official. ;-)

**Too bad, too sad**

2011-11-28 15:37:00

[Report this post](#) *Steven Riley wrote:*Too bad for this guy, he's an\*\*\*\*clown anyways. Who puts glass windows on a tree house anyways? Kinda takes the beachy feeling away.

**Nest**

2011-11-28 15:10:00

[Report this post](#) *phil c wrote:* Don't we all know by now that the government is in business to protect us from ourselves. It's not for me but I see no harm to anyone else. The way the government spends and taxes we all might be living like this one day.

**I bet he will get taxed**

2011-11-28 14:56:00

[Report this post](#) *RM wrote:*Awesome place, it won't get knocked down by a storm instead Charley Hackney, the property appraiser, will send him a letter wanting to know how much the place is worth and then Ken Burton Jr., the tax collector will send him a bill for unpaid taxes. Either way good luck I hope you get to keep it.

**He will be taxed :(**

2011-11-28 14:54:00

[Report this post](#) *RM wrote:*Awesome place, it won't get knocked down by a storm instead Charley Hackney, the property appraiser, will send him a letter wanting to know how much the place is worth and then Ken Burton Jr., the tax collector will send him a bill for unpaid taxes. Either way good luck I hope you get to keep it.

**Richard Hazens Tree house**

2011-11-28 14:27:00

[Report this post](#) *holmes bch. city hall wrote:*Building Inspectors;Should we make him tear it down or do what we told him. go ahead Richard theres nothing in the books about atree house. build it safe and make sure no one falls out of it

**I've played cards with city officials before**

2011-11-28 14:27:00

[Report this post](#) *outré woo wrote*: If they can't get him with the sea oats/hurricane/nesting sea turtle cards, the red-bellied woodpecker card, although not frequently used, may also be played.

**Tell them to get bent**

2011-11-28 14:19:00

[Report this post](#) *MikeP wrote*: If a major storm comes it will take the trees and your house let alone the Sea Grass. A few boards are nothing next to stuff left in yards. Enjoy it I think it's great.

**TREE HOUSE**

2011-11-28 14:12:00

[Report this post](#) *vickster wrote*: Seriously? Somones treehouse is newsworthy?

**Protect the wildlife. lol**

2011-11-28 14:03:00

[Report this post](#) *Rambo wrote*: I believe the tree house will disrupt the eggs of the rare Australian pine sea turtle who nests on the top branches of the tree. This tree climbing turtle is indigenous to Holmes Beach.

**Required reading for politicians and bureaucrats**

2011-11-28 13:45:00

[Report this post](#) *III Percent wrote*: "Unintended Consequences" by John Ross should be required reading for all politicians and bureaucrats. After you Holmes Beach "city officials" read it, feel free to continue picking on people who build tree houses.

**they just want money**

2011-11-28 13:38:00

[Report this post](#) *charles wrote*: The city says they have issues about safety, flora and fauna. We all know that's not true if he had paid a couple thousand dollars in permit fees there wouldn't be a problem, we would be reading about how awesome the treehouse is

**Land of the Free\*\***

2011-11-28 13:23:00

[Report this post](#) *Truth wrote*: \*\*Providing that you don't enjoy yourself or have fun. Please give most of your money to the State for nothing in return. Worry more about weeds than a man's fruits of his labors. Do not smile. Do not pray. Work hard for WIC

recipients and welfare tycoons. Sue your neighbor. Feel sorry for lazy people. Don't offend bums. Go out of business. Do not build awesome tree houses.

**its just a tree house**

2011-11-28 13:14:00

[Report this post](#) *philly wrote:*some people have nothing better to do but gripe about others,the same people got lack of attention when they were young, and most likely never had any thing cool like a tree house or just didn't have enough talent to build one. I say get off his back,leave him alone and go get a bookbuilding tree houses for dummies

[Post a comment](#)

**its just a tree house**

2011-11-28 13:14:00

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**baby turtles might think it's their mom**

2011-11-28 13:04:00

[Report this post](#) *outré woo wrote:*If they can't get him using the hurricane card, expect the sea turtle nesting card to be dealt next.

**Tree House!**

2011-11-28 13:04:00

[Report this post](#) *Chaz wrote:*I don't understand why someone can't have a treehouse at their own house, they pay their own bills, they pay their own taxes, I mean who are we to tell him what to do, but if we are to tell him what to do then he should have built the fort for himself on the ground, much safer that way I guess. But it looks cool!

**Tree House**

2011-11-28 13:02:00

[Report this post](#) *Linda wrote:*The tree house is beautiful! He is fortunate to have beachfront property! Let the man enjoy his tree house! I bet his tree house is made better than some houses!

**TREE HOUSE**

2011-11-28 13:00:00

[Report this post](#) *Satman wrote:* Oh brother.... a man builds something he enjoys and the City steps in. HURRICANES?????? I see swing sets that poses a threat. I would be worried about lighting strikes than hurricanes. City people can be funny LOL

**snowbird**

2011-11-28 12:58:00

[Report this post](#) *don wrote:* does this guy live here year round? let him see this thing go through his own house during hurricane season.

**Best I have ever seem..**

2011-11-28 12:43:00

[Report this post](#) *Shawn wrote:* Hurricane proof, consulting with EPA... LOL I bet anyone on here the City has crap all over that could blow and damage other properties, I also bet they NEVER consult on their own stuff. Kick butt Mr. Hazen!

**tree house**

2011-11-28 12:30:00

[Report this post](#) *rickr wrote:* Government micromanaging again. In the Marines we had a name for it... "Chicken \$hit". Leave the guy alone

**Omg**

2011-11-28 12:25:00

[Report this post](#) *Adrian wrote:* Have had a beach house on Anna Maria Island since I was a kid with my family and I bumped into this place over the weekend and thought to myself "thats so neat!"... Anna Maria is full of people who are bored, retired, and have nothing else better to do than call the police on young ppl trying to have a good time or call the city about how you don't like what you see in someone's property... why do

**Free This Nation**

2011-11-28 12:09:00

[Report this post](#) *Gator1 wrote:* America used to be the land of the free and home of the brave. Now it's a socialist nation full of cowards. Vote you lazy people and we can fix this problem. 47% turn out every election ain't going to fix it.

**That's too cool !!!!! Mr. Hazen I'll pay you to build me one**

2011-11-28 12:05:00

[Report this post](#) *IndianRocksBeach wrote:* Mr. Hazen, that is one nice looking treehouse. It looks pretty sturdy from the picture. Appears to be fastned to more than 1 tree. Local Government, what's the problem? You jeolous he hasn't invited you over for a drink?

**HE GOT THE OK**

2011-11-28 11:47:00

[Report this post](#) *Freedom Fighter wrote:*I guess it is the fault of the city for giving him the OK and not requesting a set of plans. TO BAD HE DIDN'T GET THE OK IN WRITING, always get it in writing. Then he could have called Morgan and Morgan, for the people. I like what some one else wrote, with the exception of living in a deed restricted community, which people chose to live in you should be allowed to do what you want with your pr

**Contact information**

2011-11-28 11:27:00

[Report this post](#) *Devon wrote:*Is there a number or email address in which we can voice our support? If they make this guy tear this down it'd sure be a shame. I live in Dunedin and I always thought we were the hardest city to live in in terms of this kind of thing. It took two years to put up a shed. This is way cooler than a shed. I want to be this guy's friend just to hang out in that thing. :)

**Hmmm Cont.**

2011-11-28 11:25:00

[Report this post](#) *Busab wrote:*Of course, all you supporters and him could go in on an island not far off the coast and be blissfully alone. That way all the northerners, and their money, could stay here without all ya all grippin bout it.

**City bureaucrats**

2011-11-28 11:23:00

[Report this post](#) *keith wrote:*hey leave the poor city bureaucrats alone ....if they didnt have this project to review what would they do during the day. Probably cheaper to fire all government workers and pay them welfare

**Hmmm**

2011-11-28 11:23:00

[Report this post](#) *Busab wrote:*Yeah, I know, people like the look of it. Sure, it's cute and if my big arse frame could fit in it I wouldn't mind sharing a glass of wine with the dude and watch the sun set. But if it isn't safe and up to hurricane standards then other people then he is at risk. Make it safe or remove it until it can be made safe.

**I Like It**

2011-11-28 11:07:00

[Report this post](#) *Old Geezer wrote:*I really like the tree house. Sure beats a lot of the gawdy crap you see along side the roads.

**Nothing better to do?**

2011-11-28 11:02:00

[Report this post](#) *Edward Huzzar wrote:* Does the city have nothing better to do? LEAVE THIS GUY ALONE! It's his property and the thing looks decent. They gave him the OK and now trying to renege on the deal? Go do something else!

**LEAVE THE MAN ALONE!!!!**

2011-11-28 11:01:00

[Report this post](#) *Debbie wrote:* Oh my God!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! All these people NEVER had a tree house when they were kids....they wished they did...(probably their dads wouldn't have issues with darn codes)....so, no one can have one! Please, let the issue alone! I wish I could have one in my tree too.

**tree house**

2011-11-28 10:58:00

[Report this post](#) *Kay wrote:* It's all about whose palm he didnt grease.... We need to vote these suckers out.....

**NICE REDNECK TREE HOUSE IT HAS ELECTRIC A/C AND HDTV**

2011-11-28 10:56:00

[Report this post](#) *BILLY BOB wrote:* that would suck if they make them tear it down. they must have seen them building it

**A concensus is reached!**

2011-11-28 10:53:00

[Report this post](#) *Martin wrote:* When was the last time you read a list of comments in total agreement? Perhaps the Occupy movement did do some good. Freedom is worth speaking out for, sacrificing for and ultimately fighting for.

**Tree House**

2011-11-28 10:50:00

[Report this post](#) *Cherokee wrote:* Just get a damn ladder, climb up on a tree branch and set your butt up there.

**What happened to freedom**

2011-11-28 10:49:00

[Report this post](#) *Andrew wrote:* This is supposed to be a free country. How is it free when you are told what you can and can't do on your own property. Seems to me like we are slowly losing our freedoms in this country. I see nothing wrong with this guys tree house. Its not like it is some big eyesore or causing problems on other peoples property

**playing the hurricane card**



2011-11-28 10:30:00

[Report this post](#) *outré woo wrote:* Creative minds are trying to be snuffed out worldwide to get people to conform to rules, regulations, and regimes...could be a woo original wikiquote right there. Uh, city officials, take note; if a hurricane hits this area direct, this tree house may be the only thing that will float.

**What will they think of next?**

2011-11-28 10:22:00

[Report this post](#) *Dott wrote:* I thought that we in this nation were suppose to have FREEDOM. This stinks. It is a adorable structure and leave this man alone. It is his property. Wish I had one on my property. There is nothing else to worry about???

**Tree House**

2011-11-28 10:00:00

[Report this post](#) *Scott wrote:* Just goes to show you that you never own your own home you always have somebody trying to tell you what you can and can not do on your property.

**I bet somebody's mad that a permit tax wasnt paid.**

2011-11-28 09:59:00

[Report this post](#) *Rick wrote:* wood held up be a couple of nails on the original thought is safe, but a well built, structuraly sound tree fort with thought through planing isn't. PLEASE!

**A dame good looking tree house**

2011-11-28 09:36:00

*bob wrote:* Someone tell the city to back off and let the man enjoy his project. It looks like it belongs in the setting.

Name:  Email:

Subject:

Comment:

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