

HOW TO OBTAIN A PERMIT FOR THE PRUNING OR REMOVAL OF A PROTECTED TREE

Redwood City's Tree Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 35 of the Redwood City Municipal Code), protects trees growing on private property that are 38 inches or more in circumference - measured at the largest point between six inches and three feet above ground. Trees of this size are protected, and cannot be pruned or removed without first obtaining a permit from the Redwood City Public Works Services Department. There is no fee for this permit at this time.

Application Submittal

The appropriate documentation for your site-specific needs must accompany your application. The bottom of the permit application page contains a checklist which helps to compile all the necessary information and will be completed after the application is submitted. Incomplete applications will not be processed and will be returned to the applicant. **Faxed applications are not accepted.**

Trees are inspected to confirm the trees meet the criteria for removal or the proposed work meets the industry pruning standards. This ordinance is in place to help protect and maintain a viable urban forest for the benefit of the entire community. The City's role is to review, confirm conditions, and make a finding based on the information provided. It is not the City's role to help you demonstrate the need for removal.

Tree Removal

In order to approve a removal permit for a protected tree, staff must make a finding that the tree meets the criteria for removal. This finding is then documented in the permit file. Replanting a tree is typically a condition for an approved removal permit. Replacement trees are based on the value of the existing tree as verified by City staff. A re-planting plan shall accompany each removal permit application and become part of the conditions of the permit.

The criteria for approving a tree for removal are based on the condition of the tree. If the need for removal isn't visually obvious, an arborist's report demonstrating the need must be included with the application. Staff must be able to find the tree to be:

1. Dead
2. Dying
3. Structurally Unsound
4. Reasonable site work will cause the tree to die or become structurally unsound

Tree Pruning

In order to approve a pruning permit for a protected tree, staff must find that the proposed pruning meets accepted industry standards. The Arboriculture industry standard applied for pruning is the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A-300 Pruning Standards. Please include a copy of the pruning work proposal with the application. Prices may be omitted.

Emergency situations

Emergency tree removal/pruning situations also require a permit. An after-the-fact permit application will need to be submitted by the property owner with documentation of the emergency situation. A replanting condition will typically be included for emergency tree removal permits.

Tree Planting Plan

One of the primary reasons tree removal permits are approved is that the tree was growing in an incompatible location. Tree replacement should occur in an appropriate place on the property and not necessarily in the same location from which the permitted tree was removed. Prior to receiving approval of a tree removal permit, a sketch or plan must be submitted that shows the intended location and species of the replacement tree. The condition for the size of the replacement tree will be based on the approved value of the tree being removed.

