

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

An original signed application is required. 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.

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, dying beyond reasonable recovery, or structurally unsound
2. 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.



TREE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE PERMIT APPLICATION

Date submitted: _____ Owner Occupied?: ____Yes ____No

The undersigned owner of the property at _____
(Service Address)

applies for a permit to: Prune (#) _____ Remove (#) _____ Tree(s) as described below:

Tree No.	Species Name	Trunk Diameter	Back Yard	Front Yard	Side Yard	Prune	Remove	Briefly state reason or comments Attach additional sheets as necessary

PRUNING applications will be approved to comply with ANSI A-300 Pruning Standards. Please submit a copy of the work proposal demonstrating compliance.

REMOVAL applications shall clearly reference visible conditions that a tree is dead, dying, or structurally unsound; or contain a sufficient report from a qualified tree specialist that clearly shows the tree is in a dead, dying or structurally unsound condition; or reasonable work planned on the property will cause the tree to die or become structurally unsound.

» TREE REMOVAL applications shall include a replanting plan or sketch submittal.

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Name of company who will perform the work: _____

Company Phone No: (____) _____ Redwood City Business License No: _____

I have read the criteria for approving permits. I agree to comply with the provisions of Redwood City Municipal Code Chapter 35, and the conditions of this permit. I agree to allow the City's representative access to the property to inspect the trees listed on this permit application and the trees and replacement trees listed in the conditions on the approved permit.

Application will be inspected within 10 working days. Determination will be made after inspection. Permit will be mailed to property owner unless otherwise specified.

_____ Property Owner Print Name

_____ Property Owner Signature

(____) _____ Mailing Address _____ Zip code _____

Applicants, please do not write below this line

Submittal Checklist

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Removal Reason Meets Criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> Contractor Listed
<input type="checkbox"/> Replanting Plan Location, Size & Type
<input type="checkbox"/> All Property Owners' Signatures
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Report, Photos, Or Documentation
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Company Work Proposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear Location Of Tree –Description, Map Or Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Redwood City Business License
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraisal of tree value (CTLA formulas)
<input type="checkbox"/> Pruning work to ANS A-300I
<input type="checkbox"/> Arborists or Contractors Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Building Permit (if construction related) |
|---|---|



TREE PRESERVATION

ORDINANCE PERMIT

Location: _____
(Service Address)

Permit Approval for: Prune (# trees) _____ Remove (# trees) _____
Root Prune (# trees) _____

See attached Permit Application for Tree List and Contractor Information

PERMIT APPROVAL

Approved: _____ Date: _____ Expires: _____

Conditions for tree removals: Plant _____ sized tree(s) on the property, as shown on the attached planting sketch/plan:
____ within ____ days of tree removal
____ Prior to final occupancy of building permit

Conditions for tree pruning: Prune to specifications based on current ANSI A-300 Pruning Standards:

____ "Crown Cleaning" }
____ "Crown Thinning" } removing up to _____% of live foliage and buds
____ "Crown Raising" }

*Multiple trees % of canopy removal approved

_____ - ____% _____ - ____% _____ - ____%
_____ - ____% _____ - ____% _____ - ____%

____ ANSI A-300 Palm Pruning

Other Conditions:

____ City of Redwood City Root Pruning Guidelines attached

**APPLICATION AND SUPPORTING SHEETS MUST BE ATTACHED TO PERMIT
APPROVED PERMIT MUST BE POSTED ON PROPERTY IN LOCATION VISIBLE FROM STREET**

REDWOOD CITY'S TREE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

WHY?

Redwood City's Tree Preservation Ordinance is in place to ensure that the larger trees on private property in Redwood City are maintained in an appropriate manner which benefits the property owners and residents of the community. The trees cannot speak up for themselves or move away from endangering situations!

Although these trees belong to individual properties, larger privately-owned trees have an impact on the quality of life of our entire community. These privately owned trees grow in the City's urban forest and contribute as much, if not more, to the quality of life of a neighborhood than the City-owned street trees and park trees.

This ordinance governs trees of any species that have grown to a size of 38 inches in circumference (or twelve [12] inches in diameter) or greater, at the largest point measured between six (6) inches and three feet above ground. For trees of this size, a permit is required prior to pruning or removal.

PRUNING STANDARDS

The City adheres to the current tree care industry pruning standards — American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A-300 Pruning Standards.

Some people have stated that their tree is too tall and needs to be cut. Physiologically, trees do not grow “too tall.” Trees can grow too lengthy for their structure, too heavy for the branch attachment, and/or can be allowed to grow for too many years without maintenance pruning. Trees also can develop structural defects that may predispose a trunk or limb to failure. The presence of trees within the urban area increases the target potential of any failure.

Normal maintenance pruning will remove dead wood and weakly attached branches, thin-out any excessively-thick foliage, shorten long limbs, and remove or mitigate most branch defects. In some instances, the pruning can lower the overall height of a tree through “crown reduction.” The typical percentage of live foliage removed during pruning should not exceed 33%, with 20% being a more realistic target, depending on the condition of the tree. Adhering to these pruning standards, the inherent structure of the tree should be enhanced.

Topping, or severe heading cuts, is not a recognized pruning standard or maintenance technique. “Topping” is the indiscriminate cutting of branches and trunk to a predetermined height without regard to tree structure or lateral branches or buds. Topping normally removes an unacceptably high percentage of the foliage from the tree. A tree's natural response to topping is to quickly grow a flush of new leaves to achieve a similar balance of the number of leaves present prior to the cutting. These new small sprouts usually grow from buds around the cut area. The dense new growth can quickly become overcrowded and weakly attached. If left unattended, the sprouts enlarge, may grow against each other and are prone to failure. Additionally, the improperly cut limb is exposed to greater opportunity for decay which can eventually cause wood failure. Even if the sprouts are attended to by follow-up pruning, the limbs are weakly attached, growing around the point where decay may be weakening the wood structure. For these reasons, Redwood City will not approve “topping” as a maintenance pruning or “safety” pruning procedure.

ENFORCEMENT

Violation of this ordinance is subject to penalties. The citation for illegally pruning a tree is \$500 per tree. The citation for illegal removal or destruction of a tree is \$500 per tree, plus planting a landscape specimen tree or trees equaling the appraised value of the original tree. The appraised value may be determined or will be verified by the City. The citation for failure to comply with a condition of the permit is \$500 plus any mitigation costs towards replacing the value loss of the tree. An ordinance violation could also be prosecuted as a misdemeanor. The penalty for a misdemeanor may be a fine/sentence of up to \$1,000 and 6 months in jail.

There is no fee for this permit at this time. Permits are normally processed within ten working days. Thank you in advance for your cooperation towards keeping Redwood City's privately owned urban forest safe and healthy.

