



TREE PRUNING REMOVAL PERMITS

Last Revised 12/18/18

TREE PRUNING PROCEDURES

Seattle Municipal Code requires that all persons who prune and/or remove privately maintained trees within the public right of way area obtain a street use permit. The City Arborist office issues the permit.

A privately maintained tree is defined as any tree growing within the public right of way area that has not been planted by the City of Seattle nor is on the City's tree maintenance list to be maintained by the City of Seattle.

To obtain a permit, fill out an application form and return it to the City Arborist office. If you are not the abutting property owner of the proposed work, you will need to include the signature of the adjacent property owner who will be affected.

The City Arborist or a representative will:

1. Visit the proposed work area to verify the extent and type of work to be done, including the types, number, and location of trees to be pruned or removed.
2. Require that all work will be done according to Seattle Transportation's Tree Pruning Guidelines and that all contracted work be performed by a qualified tree service company.

3. Tree pruning permits are free if no specialized equipment is used. The Arborist will use the following criteria to determine when a permit fee and/or a minimum deposit will be required:
 - If pruning consists of either limbs greater than 2" inches in diameter being removed, or more than 15% of the live canopy of the tree is removed, an individual permit is required to be issued prior to the work commencing.
 - If traffic lanes or streets must be closed, a traffic plan is required. The fee will not be waived for permits requiring a traffic control plan.
4. All permits issued for fee shall be picked up by the tree service company performing the work, or the property owner, at the Street Use Permit Counter located on the 23rd floor of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 – 5th Avenue.

The Permit Counter is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8:00am until 5:00pm. On Thursdays the office hours are 10:30am to 5:00pm. No permits are issued after 4:30pm.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: This Client Assistance Memo (CAM) should not be used as a substitute for codes and regulations. The applicant is responsible for compliance with all code and rule requirements, whether or not described in this CAM.

5. The contractor or citizen will be required to maintain a safe work area and protect the public at all times. All debris must be cleared and removed from the right of way area.

All permitted work must be completed within 60 working days from start to completion of work. To initiate a Tree Pruning or Tree Removal Permit, please complete an application form and return it to the City Arborist Office.

Please address all correspondence to:
City Arborist Office
800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3100
P.O. Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996

TREE REMOVAL PERMIT APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Make an application for pruning or removal permit with the City Arborist's office. You may download an application form from our website at: www.seattle.gov/transportation/permits-and-services/permits/street-tree-permits or have one mailed to you by calling the Urban Forestry Information line at 684-TREE (8733).
2. Meet the following conditions for removal.
 - Tree must exhibit conditions which would merit removal as listed in Seattle Municipal Code 15.43.030 C. Nuisance or correctable conditions will not be considered reasons for removal. Nuisance conditions may include, but are not limited to, sidewalk conflicts, insect infestations, excessive leaf/fruit/litter drop, manageability under power lines, sewer conflicts, and/or blockage of light.
 - Follow notification procedures as outlined in CAM 2307 (Public Notice for Street Trees).
3. Permit will be issued or denied:
If issued, an electronic copy of the permit will be emailed to the property owner and Tree Service Provider. If permit issuance requires the payment of fees, the property owner or contractor of choice is responsible for picking it up and paying any necessary fees at the Street Use Permit Counter located on the 23rd floor of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 2300 – 5th Avenue.

The Permit Counter is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8:00am until 5:00pm. On Thursdays the office hours are 10:30am to 5:00pm. No permits are issued after 4:30pm.
 - If the tree removal permit is denied, you will be informed as to the reason(s) the permit was denied. If you like, you may submit additional information.
 - Tree replacement. If the planting site meets minimum standards, the tree must be replaced. Replacement trees shall be a minimum of 1½ inch caliper, and shall be selected from the approved street tree list, or shall be approved by the City Arborist.
4. Stump removal. All stumps shall be removed to below ground level. Depth of removal will depend on proposed location of replacement tree.

Access to Information

Client Assistance Memos are available online at: www.seattle.gov/transportation/document-library/client-assistance-memos. Paper copies of these documents are available at our Permit Services Counter located on the 23rd floor of the Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle; phone number (206) 684-5253.