

TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE
PUBLIC TREE REMOVALS AND MAINTENANCE
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Roadside Tree Law Applicability

- The Town holds an annual Roadside Tree permit from the State Department of Natural Resources.
- As a requirement of that permit, all tree removal and maintenance work done in the Town must meet the standards of the Roadside Tree Law.
 - All tree work must:
 - Eliminate a hazard to property, public safety, or health;
 - Improve or prevent a deteriorated tree condition; or
 - Improve the general aesthetic appearance of the right-of-way.

PUBLIC TREE REMOVALS

Standard

- The standards contained in the Town's Urban Forest Ordinance used to evaluate private trees for removal also apply to public tree removals. Trees that are removed are:
 - Dead, dying, or in danger of falling; or
 - Hazardous to the safety of persons or property
- If possible, trees are pruned of hazardous conditions and not removed. In cases where extreme pruning is necessary, the final aesthetic appearance of the tree is considered in determining whether the tree is retained.

Identifying Trees for Removal

- Trees in need of removal are identified in several ways:
 - The Town arborist performs a biannual hazardous tree survey. This survey identifies hazardous trees and conditions as observable from the ground.
 - A list of trees identified for removal as a result of the survey is provided to the Town Manager.
 - The list includes the location, size, species, and a detailed written explanation of the condition of each tree.
 - The list prioritizes the trees for removal.
 - Aside from the biannual survey, trees may die or become hazardous at any time as observed by the Town arborist or reported to the Town. After evaluation, the Town arborist informs the Town Manager of such trees identified for removal and provides a written justification for their removal. With the information provided by the Town arborist, the Town Manager decides whether to remove the tree.
 - The Town's tree contractor may identify hazardous conditions that are not observable from the ground.
 - If the Town arborist is unsure about the condition of a tree's canopy following ground observation, he may request that the Town's tree

maintenance contractor climb the tree to determine if hazardous conditions exist.

- Hazardous conditions may be discovered by the Town's contractor while performing other routine pruning.
- Evidence of hazard presented by residents or independent arborists is considered by the Town arborist in making a determination of a tree's condition.

Tree Removal Procedures

- The removal of dead or hazardous trees is prioritized and scheduled by the Town arborist in coordination with the Town's tree maintenance contractor
 - A notice, visible from the street, is posted on each tree at least seven days in advance of removal.
 - The notice includes the species of the tree, estimated removal date, an explanation of the need for removal. The notice also states that a resident may send comments on the proposed removal to the Town Office before the estimated removal date, and provides contact information for the Town Office. The Town Office considers comments from residents in deciding whether to proceed with the removal; however, work proceeds under the standards outlined in the State Roadside Tree Law.
 - Exceptions:
 - No posting is required in the case of an emergency condition that threatens imminent harm to life or property
 - No posting is required for new trees that have died within two years of planting.
 - No Parking signs are posted, as needed, at least one day in advance of the scheduled work.
 - If the proposed removal requires closure of the road, residents in the affected block are delivered a notice of the closure at least two days in advance of the scheduled work.
- Stump Removal
 - The Town generally removes stumps twice per year (in the fall and spring) in order to allow for proper restoration of the public right-of-way.
 - No Parking signs are posted, as needed, at least one day in advance of the scheduled work.

Public Tree Removal Recordkeeping

- The Town keeps records of all public tree removals, including the location, size, species, tree condition, and any public comments received. Additional information, if any, about the condition of the tree observed during removal is noted.
 - A list of public tree removals is provided to the Council each month.

PUBLIC TREE MAINTENANCE

Standard

- The Town maintains all public trees in a professional manner, following generally accepted industry standards for tree care (ANSI 300 standards).

Identifying Trees to be Pruned

- Trees in need of pruning are identified by ground inspection:
 - The Town arborist inspects Town trees on an ongoing basis.
 - Hazardous conditions can be identified at any time as observed by the Town arborist or reported to the Town.
 - Maintenance pruning is targeted to eliminate deadwood, damaged branches and to elevate trees over structures.
 - Small trees are developmentally pruned to elevate branches and improve the tree structure.
 - The arborist evaluates trees to ensure that proper sidewalk and street clearance is maintained according to the standards published on the Town website.

Tree Pruning Procedures

- Pruning work is prioritized and scheduled by the Town arborist in coordination with the Town's tree maintenance contractor. The Town arborist provides written work orders to the Town's tree maintenance contractor for any work to be done. The tree maintenance contractor keeps the work order on site during the performance of any tree maintenance work. If the contractor has questions about the work to be done while on site during the course of pruning, the contractor will not proceed without clarification from the Town arborist.
 - No Parking signs are posted, as needed, at least one day in advance of the scheduled work.
 - If the proposed pruning work requires closure of the road, residents in the affected block are delivered a notice of the closure at least two days in advance of the scheduled work.
- The Town arborist regularly inspects pruning work for completeness, quality, and neatness.

Tree Pest Care

- Pesticides (spraying) are only used with the prior approval of the Town Manager in consultation with the Town Council.
- If approved, notice is delivered to the affected residents at least seven days in advance of the proposed work.
- No Parking signs are posted, as needed, at least one day in advance of the scheduled work.

Tree Pruning Recordkeeping

- The Town keeps a file of all pruning work orders for two years.

PEPCO REMOVALS AND MAINTENANCE

- PEPCO is mandated to prune and remove trees to improve electric reliability in conformance with Maryland Public Service Commission standards.
- PEPCO is required to notify the Town at least 2 months in advance of any work. The Town arborist schedules a meeting with PEPCO's arborist to review the proposed work prior to commencement. The Town works with PEPCO to minimize damage to trees resulting from line clearance, and requires that PEPCO notify the Town of the exact dates line clearance work is scheduled to be done.
- The Town arborist regularly inspects PEPCO pruning for completeness, quality, and neatness.

Adopted March 11, 2015