

City of Redmond Public Tree Ordinance



A Homeowner's Guide

Trees are a valuable part of our community. By caring for our trees today, we are making our community a better place for tomorrow.

Our City tree ordinance (Redmond City Code, Section 3.600 to 3.613) is designed to protect trees and reduce future conflicts between trees and the urban environment. It guides us when we plant, maintain, and remove trees in a public area.

This pamphlet describes the City's tree ordinance and how it may affect you.



Planting Strips

The land most often affected by the City's tree ordinance is known as the planting strip. The planting strip is the area along the side of the street between the curb line and the property line.

It is solely the owner's responsibility to maintain all trees located on private property and on the planting strip. You will need to obtain a permit from the City before planting, major pruning or removing a tree within the planting strip. The permit is free.



Planting a Tree

The purpose of the city planting permit is to ensure that the characteristics of the planting site and the species of tree to be planted are a good match, resulting in the tree growing to a healthy mature size. In doing so, the tree's growth does not become a nuisance.

When selecting your planting site and the tree species you wish to plant, give some thought to the growth characteristics of the tree you are considering. Think about the physical limitations of the planting space.

Answering the following questions before you plant, will help you determine your species choice.

♣ Is the tree species on the City Arborist's prohibited list? The permit desk at City Hall has this list for your review.

♣ What functions will the tree serve? Do you want shade, a windbreak or screen, or fall color?

♣ Are there utility wires or other obstructions underground or overhead?

♣ What is the soil like? Is it sandy? Poorly or well drained? Is there an adequate water source?

♣ Does the site provide enough room for the tree's branches, roots and trunk to grow? Planting strips less than four feet wide will not allow for the root growth of even the smallest tree. Larger trees need even more space.

Trees should be planted at least 24" from the curb to prevent conflicts with traffic and car doors. In some cases, it's better to plant a tree in the front yard instead of in the planting strip.

More information on how to plant your tree properly is within the publication, *Best Management Practices: Tree Planting*, found at the Permit Desk at City Hall.



**Before you dig call the
Utilities Notification Center
1-800-332-2344**



Tree Removal

Permits to remove public trees will be granted if the City Arborist determines that at least one of the following conditions exists:

- ♣The tree is hazardous. A hazardous tree is a tree or tree part that has a high potential to fail and cause damage or injury to people or property.
- ♣The tree is dead or dying.
- ♣The tree is diseased and presents a threat to other trees within the City.
- ♣The tree is causing damage to nearby public or private infrastructure.
- ♣The tree, which is in fair or poor condition, is affecting the health of public trees that are in good or excellent condition.
- ♣An ISA Certified Arborist/Utility Specialist has determined the tree will require topping to meet Oregon Public Utility Commission standards.



Tree Pruning

Major pruning is the selective removal of over 20% of a tree to meet specific goals and objectives. The crown is the leaves and branches of a tree measured from the lowest branch on the trunk to the top of the tree.

Topping is NOT major pruning.

No person shall top any public tree. Topping is defined as an inappropriate technique to reduce tree size; cutting a stem more than 2 years old at an indiscriminate location or back to a lateral branch too small to keep the cut stem vital (typically less than 1/3 the diameter of the cut stem); a type of pruning cut that destroys tree architecture and serves to initiate discoloration and perhaps decay in the cut stem. The City Arborist may authorize the topping of a public tree as necessary only to alleviate a dangerous condition, including electric service interruptions, which pose an imminent threat to the public or property.

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More information on how to prune your tree properly is within the publication, *Best Management Practices: Tree Pruning*, found at the Permit Desk at City Hall.



Commercial Tree Services

A tree service that does business within the City of Redmond is required to have a Redmond Business License. In order to qualify for the license, the tree service must show proof of liability insurance and must hold a residential contractor's license from the State of Oregon. If you hire a commercial tree service to plant, prune, treat or remove a tree within the City, check to make sure that they hold licenses (city and state) that are current.

A Redmond Business License is not a guarantee of quality work. The National Arbor Day Foundation recommends that a homeowner should get local references and look at examples of the tree service's work. A written agreement that specifies exactly what will be done, for how much money, and during a specific time period is also recommended.

Consider hiring an arborist that is certified by the International Society of Arboriculture. Certification means that they have passed a standardized test that requires expertise in tree care and biology. To maintain their certification, they must continue their education by attending appropriate classes on a regular basis.

If you have further questions regarding the City of Redmond's Public Tree Ordinance, please contact Rick Torassa, City Arborist at 541-504-2000 or visit http://www.ci.redmond.or.us/Department/Public_Works/