

Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw

New Westminster's urban forest is declining at a rate of 1.5% per year and the majority of this loss is occurring on private land. The Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw No. 7799, 2016 was adopted by New Westminster City Council to preserve trees on both private and public property and to assist in sustaining and growing the city's urban forest. If you wish to cut or remove a tree in your back, side or front yard, you may require a permit under the provisions of this Bylaw.

What is the benefit of regulating and protecting trees on private property?

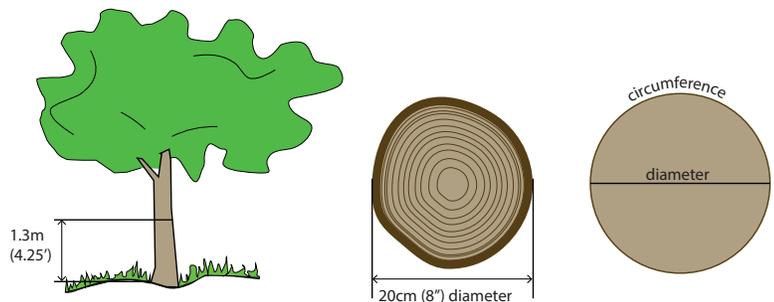
The intent of the Bylaw is to protect trees on private property from being damaged or cut down unnecessarily and to ensure the on-going health and well-being of the city's urban forest. The Bylaw is one component of a larger comprehensive Urban Forest Management Strategy which recognizes the important environmental, aesthetic and economic benefits that trees provide to the residents of New Westminster.

Does the bylaw apply to all species and sizes of trees on private property?

The Bylaw applies to all species of trees, but not all sizes. The Bylaw regulates the cutting or removal of trees on private property that measure 20 cm (8 inches) in diameter or more as measured at 1.3 m (4 feet and 3 inches) above ground level.

How do I measure the diameter of a tree?

For purposes the Tree Protection Bylaw, trees will have their diameter measured at 1.3 metres (4 feet and 3 inches) above ground level. If you do not have a diameter tape, you can determine the diameter of a tree by measuring the circumference of a tree stem, at 1.3 metres above ground level, with a regular measuring tape (like measuring your waist size). The circumference can then be divided by 3.1416 to obtain the diameter.



Does this mean that I cannot cut down a tree on my own property?

Depending on the circumstances you may be eligible for a permit to cut or remove the tree. All property owners must make application to cut or remove a protected tree on their own property and receive a permit to do so.

Are hedges protected under this bylaw?

Some hedges are protected. A hedge is not protected if it consists of five or more trees or shrubs **less than** 5 metres high, and planted less than 1.25 metres apart.

When did the Tree Protection Bylaw come into effect?

January 13, 2016.

Where can I apply for a permit?

Applications can be submitted on the main floor of City Hall at the Building Division. If you have questions about the application or permitting process, please call the Parks, Culture and Recreation Administration Office at 604-527-4567. There is also information on the City's website www.newwestcity.ca

Is there an application or permit fee for a tree cutting/removal permit?

Yes, there is an application fee and, if the application is approved, there is a permit fee. The application fee is \$75.00. The permit fees generally range from \$50 - \$150 per tree removed depending upon the site specific circumstances.

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What happens after I submit my application?

The City Arborist will review your application to ensure that it is complete. You will be notified of any missing items. Submission of an application does not guarantee that a permit will be issued. Factors that the City Arborist will consider when reviewing permit applications include (but are not limited to): the health of the tree, its significance in the neighbourhood and the proximity of the tree to existing and proposed structures.

I want to remove a protected tree that poses a threat to public safety or private property, do I still need a permit to remove this tree?

Yes. A hazardous tree (as verified by a certified arborist) is a tree with defects sufficient to significantly increase the likelihood that all or part of the tree will fall, resulting in a risk of personal injury or property damage or loss.

If I am constructing a new building or renovating an existing building, do I need to apply for a tree permit?

If you are applying for a building, plumbing, fill or demolition your permit will not be issued until you have been issued a tree permit. If there are protected trees on your property, you will be required to hire a certified arborist to provide an arborist report including, but not limited to, a tree survey, a plan that identifies the trees to be removed, a tree protection plan to safeguard trees to be retained, and a tree replacement plan that identifies the quantity, type and location of new trees that are required to be planted.

Why do I have to plant a new tree?

The objectives contained in the Urban Forest Management Strategy include increasing our city's tree canopy cover from its current 18% to 27%. The planting of replacement trees is integral to the overall Strategy and the Tree Protection Bylaw. In general, for every one tree removed, two new trees are to be planted in its place. When a permit is issued to cut or remove a tree, securities are collected (\$500 per tree) to ensure that new trees are planted and properly cared for during their first year. Cash in lieu of replanting (\$500 per tree) may be accepted where replacement planting is not physically possible on site. These funds will be used by the City to plant trees on public lands.

Where can I find more information about the Tree Protection Bylaw or the Urban Forest Management Strategy?

Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw No. 7799, 2016, Bylaw requirements and permit application process and the Urban Forest Management Strategy are posted on the City's website www.newwestcity.ca