

CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ENGINEERING DIVISION
1414 Mission Street – South Pasadena – CA 91030 – (626) 403-7240

PRIVATE PROPERTY TREE REMOVAL/REPLACEMENT PERMIT APPLICATION

Please submit plan if more than three (3) trees are involved.

Permit Fee: \$110.00 , plus
Inspection Fee: \$ 140.00

PERMIT #: _____

JOB SITE: _____

PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

CONTRACTOR'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

CITY BUSINESS LICENSE No: _____

1. Type/Variety of Tree: _____ Size of Tree: _____
(trees 4" in diameter or greater are Mature trees) (diameter of tree measured 4' from base of trunk)

Location: _____
(specific location of tree on property i.e. front yard, side yard, etc.)

List Reasons for requesting this tree removal: _____
(include all conditions warranting the removal)

2. Type/Variety of Tree: _____ Size of Tree: _____
(trees 4" in diameter or greater are Mature trees) (diameter of tree measured 4' from base of trunk)

Location: _____
(specific location of tree on property i.e. front yard, side yard, etc.)

List Reasons for requesting this tree removal: _____
(include all conditions warranting the removal)

3. Type/Variety of Tree: _____ Size of Tree: _____
(trees 4" in diameter or greater are Mature trees) (diameter of tree measured 4' from base of trunk)

Location: _____
(specific location of tree on property i.e. front yard, side yard, etc.)

List Reasons for requesting this tree removal: _____
(include all conditions warranting the removal)

PRIVATE PROPERTY TREE REMOVAL/REPLACEMENT PERMIT CONDITIONS

- 1) Conditions must exist to warrant the removal of any mature tree. Healthy trees, which are not causing a hardship on the property owner, shall not be approved for removal.
- 2) Tree removals will include complete removal of the stump and backfill of the hole.
- 3) For every tree approved for removal, multiple replacement trees must be planted anywhere on the owner's property or on City's property upon City's approval. For replacement tree(s) planting in the parkway, root barriers will be required to control the root system. The size of the replacement tree(s) is(are) based on the diameter of the trunk and the type/variety of the approved tree(s) for removal. The replacement tree(s) must be a minimum of 24" box size or as specified by the Engineering Division.
- 4) Replacement trees must be planted within 90 days of the issuance date on the permit.
- 5) Prior to planting the replacement trees, a final inspection must be conducted by the City inspector to verify conformance with tree replacement requirements. Please call to schedule an appointment at (626) 403-7370, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- 6) A 100-foot radius map and mailing labels shall be required to provide public notice of the tree removal. Residents within a 100-foot radius of the property shall be given 15-days to comment on the tree removal prior to issuance of the permit.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE: _____ Date: _____

City use only	
1. Approved or Denied (circle per tree)	Type/Variety Inspected: _____
Size of Tree _____ Replacement tree size: _____ Qty: _____ Due by: _____	
Comments: _____	
Inspected by: _____	Date: _____
2. Approved or Denied (circle per tree)	Type/Variety Inspected: _____
Size of Tree _____ Replacement tree size: _____ Qty: _____ Due by: _____	
Comments: _____	
Inspected by: _____	Date: _____
3. Approved or Denied (circle per tree)	Type/Variety Inspected: _____
Size of Tree _____ Replacement tree size: _____ Qty: _____ Due by: _____	
Comments: _____	
Inspected by: _____	Date: _____



South Pasadena Resident's Guide to the City's Tree Ordinance

Help Keep South Pasadena Green & Beautiful

South Pasadena's charm is closely related to its lush canopy of trees. Trees provide shade for buildings--saving energy for air conditioning--hold soil in place, and protect our watershed. They provide habitat for birds and other animals. Indeed, South Pasadena's efforts to maintain its urban forest have won the community acclaim as a "Tree City USA," a designation made by the National Arbor Day Foundation, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters.

To maintain the urban canopy that makes South Pasadena so inviting, the city in 1991 adopted an ordinance which governs removal and replacement of trees. Tree removals are to be reviewed by the city Public Works Department, which has a certified arborist on staff. When the Department denies a tree removal permit application, residents are free to appeal to the city's Natural Resources and Environmental Commission (NREC). At times, the Department also may choose to refer some applications for removal permits for consideration by the commission, which is a volunteer panel of residents appointed by the City Council that meets once a month.



TREE CITY USA®

The ordinance (attached) allows tree removals only when specific conditions exist. These are when:

1. Where the tree itself, its excess foliage or its limbs poses a reasonable risk of injury or harm to persons or property, or is interfering with a structure or building, and there is no feasible and reasonable alternative to mitigate the interference.

(Interference generally does not occur unless a tree is planted within three times its diameter of a structure. Interference with plumbing pipes, which can be rerouted or repaired and protected through root trimming, generally does not constitute grounds for tree removal.)

2. Where, upon taking into account the size, shape, topography and existing trees upon the lot, the denial of the permit would create an unreasonable hardship on the property owner.
3. When a written determination has been made by an ISA certified arborist, after a visual inspection and scientific evaluation that the tree is so diseased or damaged that it is no longer viable or is a threat to property or to other trees. The Public Works Director or Natural Resources and Environmental Commission may waive the requirement for an Arborist's statement when the tree can reasonably be determined to be dead by a lay person's visual inspection, or when, after conducting an inspection of the tree, the Director determines that the tree poses an obvious and imminent threat to life or property.
4. For the removal of significant or mature trees, where the replacement tree planting provides greater benefits than the existing tree's value, benefits or species.

Applicants must demonstrate greater benefits including, but not limited to:

- Reduction in energy use when trees are planted to shade structures
- Reduction in water use when planting native species, etc.
- Promotion of native species
- Increasing the number of trees on the property
- When trees are planted to abate urban noise
- When planting larger tree species

To apply for a tree removal permit you must:

- Fill out the application form; and
- Pay a permit processing fee of \$110 and a city inspection fee of \$140.

You will need the following information in order to complete the application form:

- Type of tree or tree species (common name).
- Diameter of tree. To determine the diameter, place a tape measure around the trunk 4 feet above the ground to get its circumference. Divide the circumference by 3.14 (pi) to get the diameter. If there are multiple trunks at four feet above ground, measure each the same way and add their diameters together to come up with a total diameter.
- Location of tree, including measurements in feet from any structures. (submit site plan to demonstrate tree interference to structures that are within 3 diameters of the tree) If the foundation damage is not obvious by visual inspection, a foundation report may be submitted to prove the structural interference.
- Reason for removal, that is, at least one of the following:
 - The tree is encroaching on a structure and causing damage; (damage to fences, sidewalks, or curbs do not qualify. Likewise, interferences with plumbing or sewers is not considered hardship and will not be allowed as a reason for tree removal)
 - The tree is diseased or dead;
 - The tree is creating an imminent threat to property or life; or
 - The tree is creating an undue hardship.
 - Documents to support item #4 above.
- A certified arborist's report documenting all of this information.
- Submit Diagram or Plan showing existing tree(s) onsite including common names and dbh (diameter at breast height) for all trees.

In general, tree removal will not be approved if trimming, root trimming, or minor structural modifications, including rerouting or repair of pipes accompanied with root trimming, can solve your problem. It can be less expensive to perform such minor work than to remove a tree. Trees will not be removed for aesthetic reasons.

Allergies may be considered. However, with many trees, often of the same species, nearby in most neighborhoods, it may be difficult to prove that a particular tree is causing your allergies. When the tree can be trimmed to relieve allergy conditions, the tree will not be permitted for removal.

If the Department of Public Works turns down your application, you can appeal its decision to the commission. The commission will want to examine all of the information listed above, as well as hear from you. However, in order to hear other cases in a timely way and to conduct other necessary business, the volunteer commission will limit discussion. Residents seeking simple tree removal permits will have 5 minutes to present their case and the commission will try to limit follow up discussion to 10 minutes. Development and redevelopment projects will be accorded more time.

If your tree removal permit is approved, you will have to plant one 24" box tree (or 36" box tree) as a replacement for each increment of the diameter of the tree being removed, as follows:

The current policy is one 24" box replacement tree for each 10 inch diameter, or portion thereof for Significant trees; and one 36" box native species replacement tree for each 10 inch diameter, or portion thereof for Oak & Native species.

- up to 10 inches (one replacement)
- 11 - 20 inches (two replacements)
- 21 - 30 inches (three replacements)
- 31 - 40 inches (four replacements)
- Etc.

Policy on Replacement Trees on Construction Sites:

Non-native tree removal

One 24" box tree for each 6" in diameter, or portion thereof.

(Example: The removal of a 36" diameter significant tree would require the planting of 6 (six) 24" box replacement trees)

Native species removal

Two 24" box native trees for each 6" in diameter, or portion thereof.

(Example: The removal of a 36" diameter oak tree would require the planting of 12 (twelve) 24" box native species replacement trees)

The city prefers that you plant native trees as replacements. Should you not have room to plant the trees on your property, you may arrange to have them planted on a neighbor's property. Optionally, you can pay the city \$325 per tree and the Public Works Department will plant the trees on city property, such as in parkways, parks and medians.

Other rules apply under the ordinance, including special requirements for construction projects. Please read the ordinance carefully. It is illegal to remove trees without prior approval and penalties will apply when violations occur. Permit fees and restitution in excess of \$8,000 could be imposed for tree removals without a permit.

Only you can help keep South Pasadena green and beautiful by observing the city tree ordinance.

This Guide is provided by: The South Pasadena Natural Resources and Environmental Commission
and the South Pasadena Public Works Department.