

Whose Job Is It Anyway?

Introduction

If you have a tree in the parkway (between the curb & sidewalk) or near power lines, you have probably wondered if you should prune it or if someone else should. The property owner is responsible for maintenance and pruning and for removal if that should be necessary. But, there are rules and regulations on how that should be done.

Permits are required when....

- a tree has substantial damage (more than 20%) from a storm and needs to be restructured.
- a tree is dead or diseased and needs to be removed. When trees are removed there is also a requirement in most cases that they be replaced.
- a tree hangs lower than 8 feet over the sidewalk or 14 feet over the road.
- your site of vision is obstructed by a tree at a corner or driveway.

Why A Permit Is Required

Why do you need a permit to prune? It is an opportunity for City staff to help by providing information on how to properly do the work. It is also to make sure pruning/removal is done safely and by the rules.

Trimming Around Power Lines

Trees near the power lines have different requirements. Trees should be kept three feet from the service lines, those going to the house or building, and ten feet from the distribution lines. Trimming around the service lines is reasonably safe but only qualified trimmers should work around the distribution lines.

The City has an annual program to trim the trees around the power lines. If you have any questions regarding this program call Crew Supervisor with the Parks Department at 503-992-3204 or the Operations Superintendent with the Light and Power Department at 503-992-3252.

Who To Contact

The City, in the interest of public safety, annually does some street tree trimming: clearing roads and stop signs, removing limbs that pose an imminent hazard or have fallen in the roadway are examples. Property owners should understand that this does not change their responsibility.

If you have questions about the City Tree Ordinance or are interested in the Community Forestry Commission, please call the Community Development Department at 503-992-3227.

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