



# Urban Forestry Report

## Inspections and Permits

Portland Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry issues permits for all street and park tree work, including planting, pruning, and removal. In certain cases, Urban Forestry issues permits for private tree removals. Currently, efforts are guided by City Code 20.40 Street Tree and Other Public Tree Regulations and 20.42 Tree Cutting.

Each month, the *Urban Forestry Report* gives monthly inspection and permit totals. Because not all inspections result in permit issuance, metrics of both inspections and permits issued are included. Inspection and permit descriptions and definitions are provided on the final page of this report.

### 76 ELMS INNOCULATED IN EASTMORELAND

On June 16, UF Tree Inspectors Myles Black and Charley Davis assisted Eastmoreland neighborhood with inoculation of 76 mature elm trees with Systrex for Dutch elm disease prevention.



An elm tree being inoculated for Dutch elm disease prevention.

### JUNE 2012 INSPECTIONS AND PERMITS

	INSPECTIONS COMPLETED	TREES INSPECTED	PERMITS ISSUED	TREES PERMITTED
<b>STREET TREES</b>				
Planting, general	19	145	24	58
Grey to Green	0	0	2	23
Land use reviews	28	-	1	0
Development	242	-	109	113
Pruning	108	358	102	347
Removal	77	352	59	320
Root pruning	47	90	41	90
Other	77	201	6	22
<b>PARK TREES</b>				
Planting	0	0	0	0
Pruning	16	76	19	134
Removal	15	35	12	155
Root pruning	1	4	0	0
Other	12	365	1	2
<b>PRIVATE TREES, TREE CUTTING ORDINANCE (TCO)</b>				
Code applicability inspections	65	-	-	-
Planting, mitigation	-	-	-	76
Removal	15	22	18	34
<b>EMERGENCIES</b>				
Emergency call outs	35	33	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>				
Planting	289	145	136	194
Pruning	124	434	121	481
Removal	172	409	89	509
Root Pruning	48	94	41	90
Other	89	566	7	24
Emergencies	35	33	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>1681</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>1298</b>

## Urban Forestry Crew Report

SUBMITTED BY LARRY MAGINNIS, UF SUPERVISOR

With the arrival of the seasonably warm temperatures we are afforded the luxury of accessing parks and tree priorities we normally could not access due to moist soil and turf conditions. Warm temperatures also mark the arrival of Dutch elm disease season and phenomenon known as summer limb drop. These issues and projects keep the forestry team extremely busy and productive.

Our elm inoculation program is well underway with many of our resources dedicated to the injection of Arbotect fungicide to prevent spread of Dutch elm disease to our beloved elms throughout the city. To date we have inoculated trees located in the Plaza Blocks, North and South Park Blocks. It is a technical and time consuming undertaking, however the results of our applications have proven to be positive in many of our application areas. However, we are beginning to respond to a handful of necessary elm removals due to Dutch elm disease. So far the crews have been dispatched to familiar disease locations. We hope for a moderate removal year.

Our seasonal tree establishers are once again on board and working feverishly to keep our recent tree installations alive. Their efficiency has afforded them the luxury of ensuring all of our plantings from the past 3 years get a generous supply of mulch in addition to regular watering.

Our big project this report period was an interagency agreement for tree maintenance along the Columbia buffer. Located on the South side of Columbia Boulevard from Kenton to the sewage treatment plant, trees of all shapes and sizes received some sort of maintenance. This was a huge undertaking with the end of the fiscal season being the finish line.

Other projects include the completion of the Terwiliger views clearing and Washington park. The Terwiliger views project has spanned a few report periods, however, weather and the need to perform the necessary neighborhood outreach dictated our productivity. I am happy to say it is completed and we have received great responses for our efforts. Our Washington Park project was a little more covert in that we attempted to complete some necessary pruning to help facilitate a more pleasant Rose Festival.

This next report period should have us continuing with elm removals, interagency agreements, dozens of park tree pruning and removal projects, and hopefully the arrival of some shiny new aerial lift trucks for our fleet.

## Welcome Kelly Griffin to Urban Forestry Headquarters

On July 1, Kelly Griffin replaced Keli Nation as the Office Support Specialist for Urban Forestry. Keli Nation continues to work for the City of Portland in the Office of Management Finance. Kelly Griffin is a 20-year City of Portland employee who has worked in three bureaus: Water, Transportation and Parks. She is well prepared to be the new voice of Urban Forestry, because for more than seven years, hers was the friendly voice one heard on the telephone after receiving a parking ticket! Over the course of her 12 years at PP&R, Kelly has worked in all departments of Parks – Recreation, Planning, and Operations. We welcome her to the Urban Forestry family!

## Street Tree Inventories Underway

SUBMITTED BY ANGIE DISALVO, BOTANIC SPECIALIST



Urban Forestry Commissioner Stephen Peacock served as an "Arborist on Call" for Hosford-Abernethy's inventory.

Street tree inventories are off to a strong start, with nearly 100 volunteers collecting data in the first three work days in Hosford-Abernethy and Sunnyside neighborhoods. Work days are planned most Saturdays from 8:30 am to noon through September 22.

Volunteers are particularly needed in NW District, a comparatively large neighborhood with boundaries of Burnside St. to the south, Vaughn St. to the north, Forest Park and Cornell Rd. to the west, and the Pearl District to the east. To volunteer as an arborist, data collector, or data cruncher, contact Christina Schull at [christina.schull@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:christina.schull@portlandoregon.gov) or visit <http://portlandoregon.gov/parks/treeinventory>.

# Elm Monitor Update

SUBMITTED BY DANIELLE FUCHS, ELM MONITOR

Summer is finally here, and as the sunshine lures people out to play it also brings additional stressors to Portland's elm canopy. If you frequent downtown, Ladd's Addition, or Eastmoreland, you're probably aware that another season of Dutch elm disease has started. The disease, caused by a fungus, causes elm trees to wilt and die suddenly. The fungus grows inside the vascular tissue of the trees and leads to water stress conditions, which are exacerbated in hot weather.

The subsequent wilting and browning of leaves is known as *flagging* and is the first visual symptom of this deadly disease. Unfortunately, once flagging is spotted it is too late to save the tree; the only option is to remove the tree quickly to slow or prevent the spread of the disease to neighboring elms.

Eleven cases of Dutch elm disease (DED) have been confirmed in four neighborhoods so far this season: Downtown, Hosford-Abernethy, Eastmoreland, and Piedmont. Lovejoy Fountain is a hotspot this season, with three positive cases of DED confirmed, one suspected case, and more possibly appearing as the summer continues. SW 1st Avenue between Harrison and Lincoln, just steps away from Lovejoy Fountain, is another hotspot with three more positive cases. Two more elms on SW 1st are suspected of having DED and will be sampled and sent to the lab for testing.

Ladd's Addition, in the Hosford-Abernethy neighborhood, has two confirmed cases, one by Abernethy Elementary School and one on SE Ladd Ave. south of Lavender St. A small grove of five elms at SE 28th and Harrison, also in Hosford-Abernethy, is also suspected to have DED. Eastmoreland has one confirmed case of DED, at SE 31st and Tolman; this tree has already been removed. There are only two cases in NE Portland so far, on NE Ainsworth and Cleveland in the Piedmont neighborhood.



*An elm showing classic flagging signs at 2800 SE Harrison St. in Hosford-Abernethy neighborhood.*

Urban Forestry crews are busy removing infected elms. Our skilled and dedicated high-climbers have the difficult task of taking these dying behemoths down, maneuvering around power and communication lines, buildings, and other trees. Each tree can take several days to remove. You may notice some stumps remaining where elms have been removed; these stumps will be ground out as the final step in the quarantine process. On a brighter note, look for these spots to be replanted in the spring!

If you notice any wilting or brown leaves on the elm trees in your neighborhood, don't hesitate contact Urban Forestry's elm monitor at (503) 823-6333 or [pkelm@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:pkelm@portlandoregon.gov).

## INCIDENCE OF DUTCH ELM DISEASE, JULY 2012

Neighborhood	Quadrant	Confirmed cases	Suspected cases
Downtown	SW	6	3
Hosford-Abernethy	SE	2	5
Eastmoreland	SE	1	-
Piedmont	NE	2	-



*Infected elm sapwood shows brown streaking especially in its current-season growth. Photo courtesy of OSU.*

# Tree Code Update: Urban Forestry To Test Self-Issued Pruning Permits

SUBMITTED BY ANGIE DISALVO, BOTANIC SPECIALIST



*Some street trees will be eligible for self-issued online permits beginning in October 2012*

In anticipation of the implementation of Title 11 Trees, Urban Forestry is moving forward with a customer service improvement to provide self-issued online pruning permits ahead of the July 2013 implementation date.

Urban Forestry issues all pruning permits for street tree work within the City of Portland. The current process requires a property owner to request a permit through Urban Forestry, after which a tree inspector conducts a site inspection, records site and tree details, and issues a paper permit via mail. Tree inspectors are able to document the condition of the tree and specify the type of pruning needed, and this has presumably prevented poor pruning work, in addition to providing details for pursuing tree code violations. However, due to large volume (over 1000 permits per year) and a small number of staff, the process takes about 2 weeks to complete.

Title 11 Trees allows property owners and contractors to self-issue simple permits online. Self-issued permits will improve customer service, reduce waiting time for permits, and focus staff resources on permit requests that require increased attention. However, with limited Urban Forestry oversight, allowing customers to self-issue a permit may create problems with the quality of work completed and potential violations. Limiting situations that are eligible for self-issued pruning permits, creating pruning standards, and conducting spot checks of pruning work will help the program be successful.

Urban Forestry, Bureau of Development Services, and Bureau of Environmental Services staff worked to create and test a website and online form for self-issuing street tree pruning permits. Beginning July 17, four arboriculture companies will test and review the newly-

created website, online form, and pruning standards for one month. UF staff will then use their feedback, and a staff review of their pruning work, to further refine the program prior to a public release in October.

Early implementation of this new program will allow Urban Forestry to ensure the program is working well when the new code goes into effect. Initial discussions with local tree care companies have been positive, and customers are looking forward to the improved ease of receiving a pruning permit.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PROPOSED SELF-ISSUED PERMIT

Street tree pruning permits may be self-issued online if the tree to be pruned meets the following conditions:

- The street tree is at a residential property
- Pruning is for young tree pruning, crown cleaning, or crown raising for clearance of the street and sidewalk (7.5' above the sidewalk, 11' above residential streets, and 14' over arterial streets)
- Pruning is for branches less than 6" in diameter
- The street tree is not a Heritage Tree

A traditional permit, including a tree inspection, is required if any of the following conditions apply to trees to be pruned:

- The street tree is at a non-residential property
- Pruning is for crown restoration, weight reduction, clearing infrastructure such as buildings or utility lines, or crown reduction
- Pruning is for branches greater than 6" in diameter
- The street tree is a Heritage Tree



*Citywide Tree Services, Collier Arborcare, Harrity Tree Specialists and Urban Forest Pro will be testing the permit system in July and August.*

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### STREET TREES

*Planting, General:* Requested by property owners (residential, commercial, some City agencies, etc). A UF Arborist inspects the site for existing trees, overhead wires, utilities, strip width, and other site conditions and marks where trees can be planted. Homeowners are given a Recommended Street Tree List appropriate for their site. A 2" caliper tree is standard. The property owner purchases the tree, reports the species to UF, and a permit is issued.

*Planting, Friends of Trees:* UF works cooperatively with Friends of Trees (FOT) and the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) to provide permits for FOT plantings. BES canvassers approach homeowners with potential planting spaces to sign up for tree plantings. Interested property owners contact FOT and a BES canvasser completes the planting inspections. UF spot checks 10% of BES inspections and issues final permits. Property owners are given a list of trees appropriate for their planting strip and offered for sale by FOT. This list varies from the UF Recommended Street List, and is established each year by UF and FOT. Property owners purchase and plant the tree with FOT.

*Planting, Land Use Reviews:* In the proposed development process, UF Arborists review land use applications for possible impacts on street trees and trees that may pose future concern (i.e. Heritage Trees on private property). Recommendations on location and number of street trees that will be required as a condition of a future building permit are given. Because development is only proposed, no permits are issued during land use review, except for reviews involving land division. In land division cases, a street tree review is conducted for the parcel of land where the existing structure is, because once divided into separate lots this parcel will not come under further review.

*Planting, Development:* All new construction and remodeling projects over \$25,000 require a street tree review. Sites are inspected and street trees are required to be planted in all available spaces as a condition of the building permit.

*Pruning:* A UF Arborist discusses pruning requests with the property owner, inspects the trees and issues the permit. Conditions may be included.

*Removal:* Requested by property owner through an application process costing \$35. Permits are granted if the tree is dead,

dying, or dangerous; applicants must demonstrate that their tree meets removal criteria, and the tree must be replaced if site conditions permit. A UF Arborist inspects the tree and site, and marks the curb for replanting. The property owner must purchase a replacement tree and provide a receipt to UF prior to issuance of the removal permit. Planting may be deferred until the following planting season, depending upon time of year.

*Root pruning:* Requested by property owners in the process of reconstructing damaged sidewalks, often due to lifting from root growth. A sidewalk permit must first be acquired before a root pruning inspection. A UF Arborist inspects the exposed roots once the sidewalk has been removed, and marks specific roots for removal.

*Other:* Other street tree permits include chemical application permits for contractors, and attaching temporary items to trees (i.e. ribbons and signage).

### PARK TREES

The majority of reported Park inspections and permits are for developed parks. Most natural area parks activities fall under blanket permits and their activities are guided by master plans or desired future conditions established by PP&R.

*Planting:* Developed park plantings are planned by Parks planners, Parks maintenance staff, and occasionally friends groups. Planting is usually completed by the UF crew.

*Pruning:* A UF Arborist discusses pruning requests with Parks staff, inspects the trees and issues the permit. Work may be done by Parks staff or the UF crew.

*Removal:* A UF Arborist inspects the tree for removal criteria and removal is completed by the UF crew.

### PRIVATE TREES, TREE CUTTING ORDINANCE (TCO)

*Code applicability inspection:* A UF Arborist investigates City records to determine whether the Tree Cutting Ordinance applies. TCO applies to non-nuisance trees 12" DBH or greater on certain private properties.

*Plantings, Mitigation:* Trees planted as mitigation for removals under the Tree Cutting Ordinance.

*Removal:* Requested by property owner through an application process costing \$35, after code applicability is determined. Permits are granted for trees that are dead, dying, dangerous, as well as some additional circumstances. Mitigation may be required in the form of planting or paying into the City's Tree Fund.

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Emergency response is reported in terms of inspections and trees inspected. Permits that may result from the emergency response are listed under their appropriate categories (i.e. Street Tree pruning).