



## **PRIVATE TREE PRUNING PERMIT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Need help? Visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/trees](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees), email [trees@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:trees@portlandoregon.gov), or call 503-823-TREE (8733)

### **When do I need to submit a Private Tree Pruning Permit Application?**

For trees on private property, a permit is required to prune **native trees** in an environmental overlay zone or within the Pleasant Valley Natural Resources overlay zone. Native trees are defined in the Portland Plant List, available at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/auditor/34460?a=322280>.

- Environmental overlay zones are designated by "c" or "p"
- Pleasant Valley Natural Resources overlay zone is designated by "v"

Pruning permits are limited to 5 native trees per calendar year per 10,000 square feet of site area. Additional pruning may be allowed through an environmental review or natural resource review by the Bureau of Development Services.

### **Exceptions**

A permit is not required for pruning trees in the following situations:

- pruning trees located within 10 feet of a building
- pruning to abate an immediate hazard
- pruning for trail maintenance when not exceeding a height of 8 feet and width of 6 feet across the trail

### **How to determine if your tree is in a c, p, or v overlay zone**

1. Go to Portland Maps at [www.portlandmaps.com](http://www.portlandmaps.com)
2. Type the address of the property and hit "Search" (you may have to click on the correct address if you are given a list of matching addresses)
3. Click on the "Maps" link
4. Click on the "Zoning" link
5. Look for following "Overlay" designations: c, p, or v

### **Why does the City require permits for pruning trees on private property in environmentally sensitive areas?**

Certain areas of the city have significant natural resources or environmentally sensitive features, such as native vegetation, wetlands, stream corridors, and forests. The City acknowledges these sensitive areas by restricting certain activities in order to protect important resources that provide benefits to the public. These benefits include retaining native vegetation, wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors, improving hydrology, and preserving the scenic values of natural resources.

Engaging property owners is essential to care for this valuable resource. Requiring permits helps the City:

- engage with property owners about the importance of maintaining trees properly
- provide tree care information so tree health, form, and benefits are optimized



## Pruning plan

A pruning plan must be developed by a qualified arborist. The pruning plan must include:

- The date the trees were evaluated
- A site plan showing, to scale, the location of the tree(s) to be pruned in relation to buildings, other trees, and lot lines
- A detailed description of the nature, extent, and timing of the proposed pruning activities. The pruning work must be conducted or overseen by the arborist.

**Qualified arborists** are individuals with relevant education and training in arboriculture or urban forestry, and must currently have one of the following credentials:

- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist
- American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) Registered Consulting Arborist

## Allowed pruning activities

Not all types of pruning are permitted in environmental or Pleasant Valley Natural Resources overlay zones. The following types of pruning activities may be permitted:

- **Hazard pruning** - the pruning of hazardous portions of a tree in order to abate the hazard. Pruning to abate an immediate danger does not require a permit.
- **Young tree pruning** - the pruning of young trees to develop good structure, including a strong and well established central leader, strong branch attachments, and adequate spacing and distribution of scaffold branches. Young tree pruning occurs on an ongoing basis the first ten years after tree planting.
- **Crown cleaning** - the removal of water sprouts and dead, dying, diseased, crowded, weakly attached, and low vigor branches from a tree's crown.
- **Crown thinning/weight reduction** - the pruning of branches to reduce the weight of limbs or increase air circulation or light penetration.
- **Crown restoration/crown shaping** - pruning to influence the shape of the tree's crown, generally to improve the structure, form, and appearance of trees that have been improperly pruned, vandalized, or damaged by storm.
- **Crown raising** - the removal of the lower branches of a tree in order to provide clearance for vehicles, pedestrians, and buildings. The City of Portland requires maintaining clearance standards 7.5' above the sidewalk, 11' above residential streets, and 14' above main arterial streets. Pruning private property trees for trail maintenance when not exceeding a height of 8 feet and a width of 6 feet does not require a permit.
- **Clearing infrastructure** - pruning to reduce conflicts with infrastructure, such as buildings or utility lines. No permit is required to prune trees located within 10 feet a building.
- **View windowing/vista pruning** - selective thinning of branches in specific areas of the crown to allow a specific view, usually by creating a "window."

## Prohibited pruning activities

Here are some examples of pruning activities that will not be permitted. This list is not inclusive.

- **View clearing** – indiscriminate pruning of large swaths of a tree to clear a viewpoint.
- **Height reduction/crown reduction** - pruning to reduce the height or overall size of the tree's canopy.
- **Topping** - using severe heading cuts to reduce the height of the tree.

## Private Tree Pruning Permit Application instructions

- 1) Have a practicing Certified Arborist prepare a pruning plan.
- 2) Fill out the attached application completely and legibly. All information is required.
- 3) Submit the completed application and arborist pruning plan in **one** of the following ways:
  - by email to [trees@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:trees@portlandoregon.gov)
  - by fax to 503-823-4493
  - by mail to Portland Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry, 1900 SW 4th Ave. Suite 5000, Portland, OR 97201
  - in person at the Development Services Center (DSC), 1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. 1<sup>st</sup> Floor
    - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8a.m.–3p.m.; Thursdays 8a.m.–noon
    - Note: there may be a wait time at the DSC

## Permit process

1. Complete the Private Tree Pruning Permit Application and submit it to Urban Forestry along with a Certified Arborist's pruning plan.
2. An Urban Forestry Tree Inspector will contact the applicant to arrange a site visit within about 2-3 weeks of receiving the completed application. To check the status of a permit application, visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/permits](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/permits). After inspecting the site, the Tree Inspector will approve or deny the permit. The applicant or property owner may appeal a denied permit. Learn more about appeals at [www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/appeals](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/appeals).
3. Once receiving a permit, the permittee has 30 days to conduct the tree work. A qualified Certified Arborist must perform or oversee the tree pruning work. Work must be conducted in accordance with nationally accepted pruning standards.

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## PRIVATE TREE PRUNING PERMIT APPLICATION

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All information is required. Please fill out the application completely and legibly.

### SITE INFORMATION

Site address: \_\_\_\_\_

Overlay zone:  Environmental (c)  Environmental (p)  Pleasant Valley Natural Resources (v)

# of trees requested to prune: \_\_\_\_\_

Tree location notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Property owner name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### ARBORIST INFORMATION

A pruning plan must be developed by a qualified arborist. The pruning work must be conducted or overseen by the arborist. **Qualified arborists** are individuals with relevant education and training in arboriculture or urban forestry, and must currently have one of the following credentials:

- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist
- American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) Registered Consulting Arborist

Arborist name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist ISA number \_\_\_\_\_

American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) Registered Consulting Arborist ASCA number \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name), am currently certified as an Arborist by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) or am a Registered Consulting Arborist with the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA). I understand that Title 11 Trees and Title 33 Planning and Zoning identify reasons substantiating issuance of a private tree pruning permit. I have evaluated the trees listed in this application for pruning.



TREE INFORMATION			
Tree #	Species	Tree trunk diameter at 4.5'	Comments (describe pruning type)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

PRUNING PLAN
<p>Attach a pruning plan prepared by the arborist specified in this application. The pruning plan must include:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The date the trees were evaluated: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A site plan showing, to scale, the location of the tree(s) to be pruned in relation to buildings, other trees, and lot lines.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A detailed description of the nature, extent, and timing of the proposed pruning activities.</p>

NOTICES
<p><b>Statement of Fact:</b> By signing or initialing, I certify that the facts and information set forth in this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any falsification, misrepresentation or omission of fact (whether intentional or not) in this application or any other required document, as well as any misleading statement or omission, may be cause for revocation of permit, regardless of how or when discovered.</p>
<p><b>Statement of Compliance with City Code:</b> By signing or initialing, I agree to comply with City of Portland Code Title 11 Trees. I understand that submitting an application does not entitle me to a permit, and I must have the permit in hand before beginning any work. Failure to obtain a permit or violating the terms of a permit may result in civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per violation per City Code Title 11. I agree to hold harmless the City of Portland, its agents, officers, and employees for any damage or injury caused by reason of planting, placement, maintenance, or removal of trees.</p>
<p>Property Owner Name: _____ Property Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____  <i>Initials are acceptable if submitting electronically</i></p>
<p>Arborist Name: _____ Arborist Signature: _____ Date: _____  <i>Initials are acceptable if submitting electronically</i></p>

**Submit complete application:** by email to [trees@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:trees@portlandoregon.gov); by fax to 503-823-4493; or by mail to: Portland Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry, 1900 SW 4th Ave. Suite 5000, Portland, OR 97201. Please allow 2-3 weeks for your permit application to be processed. To check the status of your application, visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/permits](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/permits).

STAFF USE ONLY
Intake date: _____
IVR #: _____