City of Richmond

Bulletin
Building Approvals Division
6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

www.richmond.ca Fax: 604-276-4063

Tree Protection Bylaw 8057

No.: TREE-01
Date: 2006-05-09
Revised Date: 2012-02-13

This Bulletin is only a summary of Tree Protection Bylaw 8057.

To review the bylaw in its entirety, please obtain copy from the City of Richmond website, www.richmond.ca or for a fee from Richmond City Hall.

Effective Date: May 9, 2006

Purpose of Bylaw

Tree Protection Bylaw 8057 was adopted to regulate, prohibit and safeguard trees on private and city land from being unnecessarily removed, killed or substantially cut (i.e. Topped) or damaged. To monitor replanting requirements and to sustain a healthy viable urban forest.

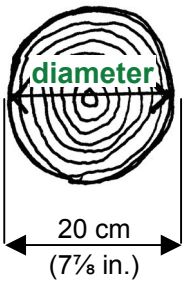
Restrictions and Exemptions

A person must not cut or remove a tree, or cause, suffer or permit any tree to be cut or removed, except in accordance with the terms and conditions of a valid permit issued under this bylaw.

A permit is required:

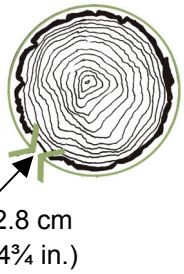
- To cut or remove a tree having a trunk diameter at breast height (dbh) measuring 20 centimetres (7⅞ inches) or larger, and capable of reaching a height of 4.5 meters (14 feet 9 inches), on land owned privately or on City land, unless an exemption applies;
- To cut or remove any tree within an environmentally sensitive area, regardless of size, unless an exemption applies.

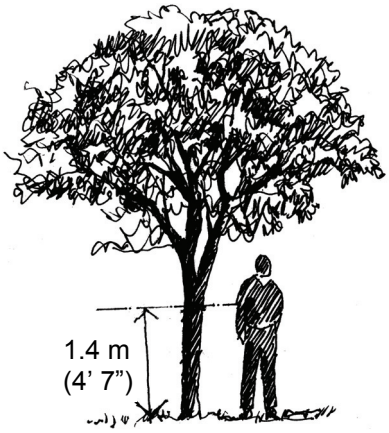
How to Measure Diameter



OR

If you cannot measure diameter, then measure circumference in the following manner:





A permit is not required:

- For any tree under 20 centimetres (7 7/8 inches) dbh unless it is in an environmentally sensitive area.
- On an emergency basis because a tree has been severely damaged by natural causes and poses an imminent danger;
- For the normal pruning of trees or hedges;
- For specific lands including those used as golf courses;
- For the production or cutting of trees under a valid, existing licence for a tree farm, nursery or Christmas tree farm;
- For necessary farm operations under the Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act;
- Where a development permit and/or rezoning application, which addresses the removal of the tree(s) has been approved;
- For public utility companies or their contractors providing a public service.

Application Process

- A **non refundable** fee of $52.00 per permit application.
- The permit fee is waived for one tree per lot in a twelve-month period.
- The permit fee is waived for a hazard tree.
- All permits must be applied for **in person** at City Hall with any pictures or documents to support the application. (see bulletin Tree-02 at www.richmond.ca).
- All approved permits must be displayed on site 72 hours before tree removal.

Replacement Trees

It is required to plant and maintain one or more replacement trees for each tree cut and removed except:

- For cutting or removing one tree per year per parcel with a permit.
- For cutting or removing a hazard tree.
- Where a permit is not required, e.g. farm operations, emergency situations or normal pruning.

Replacement trees must meet plant conditions and structure requirements as stated in "BC Landscape Standard" of the BCSLA/BCLNA and "Canadian Standards for Nursery Stock" of the CNTA.

Replacement trees are to be planted on the same lot as the tree removal unless permission is granted to plant trees on City Property.

Penalties

Any person who contravenes or violates any provision of this bylaw can face fines of up to $10,000 per tree and a requirement to replant.

Offences include:

- Causing physical damage to any tree within the drip line including canopy, roots and trunk. This encompasses tree topping and the re topping of trees excluding hedges.
- Cutting or removing any tree or replacement tree with out a valid permit.
- Failure to place or maintain a prescribed protection barrier around trees to be cut or removed for the duration of all construction or demolition.
- Failure to plant and maintain trees in accordance with sound horticultural and arboriculture practices.
- Failure to post a valid permit in a prescribed location for 72 hours prior to tree cutting or removal.

For a complete list see Bylaw 7321 Schedule B13.

Interpretation of the Bylaw

Definitions

Certified Tree Risk Assessor – A Certified Arborist with additional current training and certification in tree risk assessment determined by Worksafe BC.

Cutting or Removal - means to kill, remove or substantially destroy a tree by any means, including without limitation, knocking down or cutting into the tree, the topping of a tree and the cutting of any main stem or other leader or trunk.

DBH (Diameter Breast Height) – means the diameter of the trunk of the tree measured at a point 1.4 metres above the natural grade, except where the diameter of a tree having multiple trunks 1.4 metres above the natural grade shall be the sum of 100% of the diameter of the largest trunk and 60% of the diameter of each additional trunk.

Drip Line – means a circle on the ground around the trunk of the tree, the radius of which is the distance between the outermost twigs of the tree and the centre point of the trunk, or its vertical extension.

Hedge – means a row of three or more trees that through growth or pruning forms a continuous dense screen of vegetation from ground level that provides privacy, fencing, wind breaking, and / or boundary definition.

Topping – means the removal of major portions of a tree crown by cutting branches to stubs or to the trunk or cutting of the main leader or branches, and includes re-topping or previously topped trees.

Questions

If you have questions or require further information please contact:

- Tree Bylaw Staff by phone at 604-247-4684 or by email at treeprotection@richmond.ca.

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