

MTree Permit - DNV Master Requirement ENV 118



DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER

Purpose

To regulate cutting or removal or damage to trees as identified in the *Tree Protection Bylaw 7671 (2012)* which can be viewed in its entirety at the District website at <https://www.dnv.org/business-development/tree-permit>

Application Submission

District Tree Permit Application Form: This form can be used by both homeowners and arborists. The Application form <https://docs.dnv.org/documents/tree-permit-application-form.pdf> and the Tree FAQ can be viewed at <https://docs.dnv.org/documents/tree-permit-faq-2023.pdf>

Arborist Report: can be submitted with all pertinent detail as per the tree permit application form requirements. Any off-site or shared trees will require signed authorization from the respective owners.

Requirements

For a request to prune or remove a “protected tree”, as defined in the *Tree Protection Bylaw*, an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist report is required.

For a request to remove a “large diameter tree”, as defined in the *Tree Protection Bylaw*, a homeowner can submit the tree permit application form without an accompanying arborist report. However, for pruning a “large diameter tree”, an arborist report or a detailed pruning specification from an arborist will be required.

For a request to prune or remove a “protected” or “large diameter tree” for the abatement of an imminent threat to persons and property, a report by a current credential holder of the Tree Risk Assessor Qualification (TRAQ) administered by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) adhering to the “Tree Risk Assessment Manual”, or an industry recognized equivalent acceptable to the District, will be required.

Report Content

The Certified Arborist shall state their findings regarding the condition of the subject tree(s) in a recognized industry standard format (ISA) and quantify the level of any defects or decay found. Please note that District approval is required prior to the use of invasive decay detection methods. Approval will only be given when all non-invasive industry recognised methods have been exhausted.

The Arborist report should contain all relevant facts concerning tree health and hazard mitigation and prescribe a pruning regime or structural support system most relevant to the species and particular situation in order to mitigate potential hazards within the tree canopy. If the tree contains visible defects, which could result in catastrophic failure of the whole or large parts of the tree, the prescription must examine the opportunity to create a wildlife snag as a first step. If this would not be appropriate under the circumstances, then complete removal of the tree may be considered. District policy requires that all pruning and retention options be explored prior to recommendation for removal.

The report should take into consideration all factors concerning the location of the tree, riparian habitat, slope considerations and potential for restriction or removal of any identified target.

The report should have the following content:

- Be typewritten and signed and dated by the project arborist.
- Arborist name and credentials including certification numbers
- Company address, contact phone numbers and email address
- District Business Licence Number
- Proof of professional liability insurance
- Client's address and contact details that must include an email and/or phone number
- Client's signed authorization letter if they are requesting the arborist to act as their agent and require the arborist to pick up and pay for the tree permit
- Civic address or legal description of the lot where the tree(s) are located and any existing covenants pertaining to trees or natural hazards shall be identified and attached to the report.
- Date of the site visit and report issued
- Detailed description of the trees, a location plan clearly identifying the position of the tree(s) within or adjacent to the site and labelled photographic evidence of any significant structural defects or decay/fungal fruiting bodies or actionable nuisance issues found.
- Summary details and locations of all other trees not protected by the *Tree Protection Bylaw* slated to be removed or pruned.
- All measurements should be in metric and diameter readings must be in accordance with the District "How to Measure a Stem Diameter" guidelines found here <https://docs.dnv.org/documents/tree-measurement-guide.pdf>

- A clear and concise specification and rationale for the works recommended.
- All tree risk assessments must be presented for each tree assessed with the individual component evaluated including the assessor's rationale for the given risk rating. The assessor must explore all alternatives to finally prescribing whole tree removal as the only measure to mitigate an imminent threat of failure.
- For trees located on 20 degrees (36%) *steep slope* or greater, the *Tree Protection Bylaw* Part 5, Section 12 (b) vii contains the following requirement:
 "where *tree(s)* are on a *steep slope*, a report signed by a registered professional engineer, geoscientist or forester that any proposed pruning or *removal* shall not result in an increased risk or danger of flooding, erosion or slope instability".
 As part of the District's due diligence we cannot issue a permit until we are in receipt of a sealed report.
- A restitution replanting plan for any required replacement tree planting, indicating the location, species, size and class of tree(s) or vegetation to be planted¹.
<https://docs.dnv.org/documents/tree-replant-guide.pdf>

Please note: Incomplete or draft reports, and reports with tree descriptions and work specifications that are ambiguous, lack sufficient detail and/or do not comply with modern arboriculture standards and practices may significantly delay or restrict the issuance of a tree permit.

Environmental or other approvals

Reports shall consider ecological and environmental factors that may be affected by the work activities and meet the requirements of the federal and provincial environmental regulations, such as Species at Risk Act (SARA). For any work adjacent to top of bank of watercourses or waterfront areas or on *steep slopes*, with respect to removal or modification of any vegetation, soil, or large woody debris, please also refer to: District Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw 6515
<https://www.dnv.org/bylaws/environmental-protection-and-preservation-bylaw> and / or, Development Permit Area (DPA) <https://www.dnv.org/business-development/development-permit-areas-dpa> for,

- Streamside Protection DPA,
- Slope Hazard DPA, and
- Natural Environment DPA

The timing of any tree / vegetation removal / clearance is to be scheduled to avoid the bird nesting season (approximately February 28th to September 1st). If within the nesting window, a survey by a qualified environmental professional should be conducted to identify active nests or woodpecker holes, apply appropriate site and species specific buffers and/or timing windows as well as put necessary permits in place to remain compliant with the federal *Migratory Birds Convention Act* 1994 and Section 34 of the provincial *Wildlife Act*.

¹ A fee estimate, maintenance regime and site preparation details may also be required

Exemptions

The exceptions for the submission of a tree report or application form prior to the issuance of a tree permit are:

- That a “protected tree” is in a condition of “failure in progress”, as determined by a Certified Arborist / Tree Risk Assessor, where there is imminent and immediate threat to persons and property that cannot be made safe other than by emergency removal or pruning.
- In the event that nesting birds are present and the part of the tree containing the nest or roost has to be removed, the applicant must comply with applicable provincial legislation and the nest should be removed by a Registered Professional Biologist with the necessary permit(s) in place.

Notification procedure:

- In the first instance, the District should be contacted to notify that the tree(s) require emergency removal/pruning. In the event that District staff is unable to undertake a site visit to give a verbal authorization, a post removal report must be submitted within two working days from date of the works being carried out and/or trunk and roots and any failed sections of tree be retained on site for staff review.

Please note that failure to provide satisfactory evidence that the emergency works were undertaken as per the exemption criteria above may result in penalty fines and required replanting.

Related Requirements/Documents/Forms

If the permit application is part of a building permit or development application, then the appropriate tree impact report with a retention and detailed protection plan will be required. See <https://www.dnv.org/business-development/building-permit-single-family-home>

Contacts

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