

# Ordinance 478 – Tree Protection Regulations

## Key Elements

- In Woodinville, the requirement for trees is achieved by having a certain level of tree density. Tree density is measured by the species of the tree and the size. Size of tree is measured by the diameter-at-breast height (4.5 feet above the ground). Based on the species and size, tree credits are determined – the larger the tree, the higher the credit. All properties in Woodinville are required to meet these tree credits:
  1. In the downtown (CBD) zone, 30 tree credits per acre are required.
  2. On single-family residential lots less than 7,200 square feet, 30 tree credits per acre are required.
  3. On all other properties within the City, 60 tree credits per acre are required.
- Most tree removals require a permit, including hazard and nuisance tree removal.
- All arborists must be certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). To find a certified arborists or check an arborists certification go to this website: <http://www.isa-arbor.com/findarborist/findarborist.aspx>
- Any work completed by an arborist (including tree inventories, determination of hazard or nuisance trees, etc.) requires the arborist to have secondary certification in tree risk assessment.
- Tree removals are divided into four categories, or tree plans.
  1. Tree Plan 1 is for single-family and duplex projects, including alterations and additions. Tree Plan 1 requires a site plan; information on the species, health and size of the existing trees; calculations of the tree density and planting plan to meet the required tree density. Additional requirements may be included depending on where the existing trees are in relation to the project.
  2. Tree Plan 4 is for tree removal when no other development is expected. This Tree Plan is for cutting healthy trees, trees in critical areas, and hazard trees. Two healthy trees may be cut down within any 12-month period. An unlimited number of hazard or nuisance trees may be cut (with arborist report and a permit), but if more than two such trees are cut down, no additional healthy trees may be cut down within the 12-month period. Re-planting to maintain required tree density may also be required.
  3. Tree Plans 2 and 3 are related to development proposals for multi-family residential, non-residential, and subdivision projects. These plans require more work than the other Tree Plans because of the scale of the projects. This additional work includes a surveyed tree location plan, a tree inventory completed by an arborist, tree protection measures, and a maintenance agreement.
- Healthy trees that are in critical areas, heritage trees, tree groves, and large trees are considered Type 1 Trees, and are encouraged to be retained. The City is authorized by the new regulations to require changes in development plans to preserve these trees.

- Development projects are required to install tree protection measures before clearing a site for trees that will be retained. These measures include: installing fencing 5-feet beyond the driplines of retained trees, prohibiting equipment or work from occurring within this area, and requiring an arborist to be on-site when a tree may be impacted.
- Incentives were built into the code to encourage planting of native species. These selected species will be allowed to receive more credit when they are planted than other species of the same size would receive.
- Enforcement and fines have been strengthened. Illegally cutting a tree may result in a fine of \$1,000 (per tree), and replanting may also be required.

**TIPS:**

- For trees you think could pose a hazard to your property, please contact the City well in advance of adverse weather. It may take up to 3 weeks for the City to review permits requiring a Tree Plan IV, including permits for hazard or nuisance trees.
- When getting bids from tree service companies, ask them if they have a certified arborist as a tree risk assessor (secondary certification).
- Review the brochures available on the City website for tree removal for varying types of projects, at [www.ci.woodinville.wa.us/Live/TreePreservation.asp](http://www.ci.woodinville.wa.us/Live/TreePreservation.asp)
- There are few exemptions in the code from the permit requirement. Please call the Development Services Department at (425) 489-2754 to find out whether a permit is required and which Tree Plan is required for your project.