

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT STREET TREES

The city seeks to preserve the beauty and health of its urban forest and the environmental health of the community. In part, the city accomplishes this through preservation of street trees. Street trees are located in the street or other public place and can be either publicly or privately owned. Street trees include trees located in the parking strip or behind a monolithic sidewalk.

Below are some of the most commonly asked questions about street trees. If you do not see the answer to your street tree question, contact the Forestry Division at (650) 903-6273 or by email at parks@mountainview.gov for assistance.

- 1. How can I determine which trees are street trees?** Street trees are planted in two locations along city streets. Some are planted in the “parking strip,” the open space that runs between the curb and the sidewalk. Where a parking strip doesn’t exist, street trees are planted behind the sidewalk (often called a monolithic sidewalk), and are located in the front yard of the property owner. If you are unsure if a tree is a street tree, contact the Forestry Division at (650) 903-6273 or by email at parks@mountainview.gov. Staff will visit your location to make a determination.
- 2. How do I report a street tree problem?** During normal business hours, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., call (650) 903-6273. If you have a tree related problem after normal business hours call (650) 903-6395.
- 3. Who do I contact if I want my street tree evaluated or pruned?** Please contact the Forestry Division at (650) 903-6273 or by email at parks@mountainview.gov. Staff will be happy to provide information on your street tree or make a site visit to evaluate the tree.
- 4. Who is responsible for pruning street trees?** The Forestry Division prunes, plants and removes dying, damaged or diseased street trees. Property owners are not permitted to prune street trees without written permission from the city. Please contact the Forestry Division at (650) 903-6273 or by email at parks@mountainview.gov for all street tree service requests.
- 5. Does Mountain View have a routine pruning schedule?** Approximately 28,000 street and park trees are trimmed on a 5-7year cycle. Trees ranking as critical or high priority are scheduled for service first. Trees may be pruned more frequently depending on the species and growth rate of the tree. Contact the Forestry Division office to determine when your street tree was last pruned.
- 6. How do I request the planting of a street tree?** Call the Forestry Division to request a tree. Staff will evaluate your property to see if there is

appropriate planting space. Considerations for planting include spacing, proximity to sewer, gas and water service lines, as well as proximity to sidewalks, driveways, streetlights, etc. Street tree planting is typically scheduled in the fall.

7. **Can I select the type of street tree planted?** The tree must be chosen from a list of tree species previously approved by the City. This master street tree list has tree species selected for each street in Mountain View, in order to maintain a diverse urban forest. If you have concerns regarding the species for your street, staff will work with you to find an appropriate species.
8. **Who is responsible for watering new street trees?** The property owner is responsible for watering young street trees. The first two years are critical and the tree will need to be watered weekly from spring through fall.
9. **Who owns Mountain View's street trees?** Street trees planted in Mountain View are owned by the property owner. The city has the authority to plant, prune or remove street trees. However this does not affect ownership or liability. Information on street trees may be found in the City Code, Chapter 32 Trees, Shrubs and Plants, Article 1.
10. **I have an issue with roots from the street tree. Who is responsible?** The property owner is responsible for damage caused by tree roots and for mitigating root issues on private property. The city may repair damage caused by roots to public improvements such as sidewalk, curb and gutter.
11. **When can a street tree be removed?** Normally, a street tree is removed only if it is dead, dying, structurally unsound, or creating a problem that cannot be resolved without causing great harm to the tree. Street tree removal requests are processed on a case-by-case basis which includes a site inspection. The decision is made by the City Arborist.
12. **I don't like my street tree. Can it be replaced with another tree?** In most cases, no. Typically, only trees that are dead, dying or structurally unsound will be removed. Contact the Forestry Division at (650) 903-6273 or by email at parks@mountainview.gov if you would like your tree evaluated for replacement.
13. **Can a street tree be removed because it's messy?** Generally, no. All trees provide a benefit to the community but there can be a cost associated with the benefit. The cost may be leaf litter, fruit or pod droppings or root issues. In most cases, these are not sufficient reasons to remove a street tree. Leaf debris can be placed in the gutter during the fall and will be picked up by Streets Division crews.
14. **If my street tree is removed, can I have the wood?** The property owner can request the crew leave the wood for the owner when a street tree is removed from the owner's property.
15. **Does the city treat street trees for insects?** Forestry Division staff treat specific trees by request. When there is a request for pest control, division staff will evaluate each situation to determine if treatment is required. Mountain View uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to pest control and will use natural predators and biological controls when

possible to treat problems with an emphasis on minimizing the use of pesticides. If action is recommended, treatment will be scheduled and the resident will be advised.

- 16. Do I need a permit to prune or remove a street tree on my property?**
Street trees, which are often on private property, may not be pruned or removed by the property owner without the city's written permission. If you have any question whether your tree is a street tree, heritage tree or other, please contact the Forestry Division at (650) 903-6273 or by email at parks@mountainview.gov. Information about heritage trees may be found under FAQs for Heritage Trees, and in the Heritage Tree Ordinance at <http://www.mountainview.gov>.