

Regarding **TREE CONCERNS** within the **District of West Vancouver**

JANUARY 2026



IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to various limitations, the District does not regularly inspect all trees on District property within the municipality. As needed, a District arborist will inspect trees on District property to address any potential hazards to the public or property.

See: westvancouver.ca/trees westvancouver.ca/tree-bylaw westvancouver.ca/firesmart-community

Trees are protected on private property and municipal property (e.g., boulevards, parks, and trails), and in environmentally sensitive and covenanted areas.

PRIVATE PROPERTY TREE WORK

- District staff do not inspect or manage trees on private property.
- Protected trees on private property that require a permit to cut include; any species 75 cm in diameter or larger, any species 20 cm in diameter or larger on developing properties; arbutus, Garry oak, Pacific yew, Pacific dogwood, yellow cedar, and shore pine 20 cm in diameter or larger; trees 5 cm in diameter or larger located within 15 m of the top of a watercourse bank and/or within 15 m of the high-tide mark of the ocean; and Heritage trees.
- A *Private Property Tree Cutting Permit* must be obtained prior to cutting protected trees on private property.
- A replacement tree must be replanted for every protected tree removed on private property.
- The *Good Neighbour Bylaw* does not address tree issues on private property and cannot be used to settle tree concerns between neighbours. These issues are outside the District's ability or role to resolve. Neighbours should communicate directly to address their concerns.
- If branches are overhanging from a neighbour's tree, residents can hire a contractor to trim them back to the property line. The contractor should ensure the work done meets arboriculture industry standards and will not negatively impact the long-term health of the tree(s). Permits may be required for pruning. Issuance of a tree permit does not affect property rights that owners may have in relation to a tree.
- If a dead tree or a stand of dead trees is on a neighbouring property, neighbours should communicate directly to address their concerns. Permits may be required for tree work.
- Trees on private property that impact electrical and communication service lines are the responsibility of the landowner. Residents can hire a contractor to trim or remove the tree. Permits may be required.
- An *Environmental Development Permit* is required for any removal or pruning work on trees 5 cm in diameter or larger that are located within 15 m of the top of a watercourse bank (Watercourse Protection Area).
- A *Foreshore Development Permit* is required for any removal or pruning work on trees 5 cm in diameter or larger that are located within 15 m of the natural boundary (high tide mark) of the ocean (Foreshore Protection Area).

MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TREE WORK: NON-HAZARDOUS TREES

- A *Municipal Property Tree Cutting Permit* must be obtained before any tree work can be done on District land including boulevards, parks or trails.
- Neighbour consent may be required for tree permit applications. Based on the impact of the proposed tree work, neighbours within a varying distance may need to be contacted by the applicant.
- For non-hazardous tree work on Municipal Property, permit fees, cost of tree work, and any cost of restitution will be the responsibility of the applicant/owner.

MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TREE WORK: HAZARD TREES

- The District only removes trees and limbs deemed to be hazardous and does not prune or remove a tree for nuisance issues, view creation, or potential fire risk.
- Upon notification, a District arborist will inspect trees on District property and address hazards to the public or property. This applies to trees on District boulevards, dedicated roads, parks, or trails.
- If trees are deemed to be hazardous, the hazard will be addressed at District expense as soon as practical.
- An inspection process will generate a tree rating priority based on condition and urgency. The ratings are Priorities 1, 2, or 3.
- Priority 1 will require immediate action by a contractor.
- Priority 2 will be addressed as soon as practical within work schedule limits.
- Priority 3 will be documented for monitoring and action, and will be addressed at a future time.

FIRE-RISK-RELATED TREE REMOVAL REQUESTS: PUBLIC LAND

- Due to drought and hemlock looper moths, there are a considerable number of dead hemlock and cedar trees across the District.
- A hazardous tree is a tree that is dead, dying, unstable, has root damage, is diseased and is likely to fall and hit a target (i.e. dangerous to people or property). A standing dead tree or group of standing dead trees may not be deemed a hazard.
- Non-hazardous dead trees and stands of non-hazardous dead trees will not be removed at the expense of the District.
- Residents can apply to prune or remove trees, including groups of dead trees on District-owned lands and parks, at their own expense, using a District-approved contractor.
- The perception that dead trees pose a “potential fire risk” is common. However, studies have shown that tree die-offs do not increase wildfire risk. Weather is the predominant factor driving wildfire hazards.

FIRE RISK ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

- The District encourages you to apply FireSmart™ Principals to your property and surrounding area, including regular clean-up of accumulated fallen branches, dry grass, and needles to eliminate potential surface fuels. Pruning branches on evergreen trees is encouraged on your property to a height of 2 metres from the ground within 30 metres of your home. Permits may be required.

