

Town of Richmond Hill Tree Preservation By-law Fact Sheet 1.0 Preserving Richmond Hill's Trees

Our urban forest (the tree cover in our community) is important for our commitment to a healthy, safe and environmentally sustainable community. Not only are trees essential for our quality of life today, they create a valuable legacy for future generations.

The Town's Street Tree By-law protects the trees on public boulevards while the Park Use By-law protects the trees in public parks and open spaces. The Tree Preservation By-law protects the trees on private property.

Benefits of Trees

Trees clean the air.

Leaves act as natural air filters by capturing pollution particles. Trees also take in carbon dioxide and produce oxygen for us to breathe.

Trees prevent erosion and improve water quality.

Trees absorb rain and snow melt, thereby reducing stormwater runoff and preventing erosion and flooding. As trees absorb runoff water, they also act as filters taking-up chemicals and in doing so help to prevent the pollution of our nearby rivers and streams.

Trees save energy.

Trees cool the air by providing shade and releasing moisture into the air through their leaves. Homes shaded by trees require less energy for cooling, which means lower utility bills and less risk of black-outs in the summer.

Trees raise real estate values.

Shaded neighbourhoods and well-landscaped yards increase real estate values and the speed of house sales.

Trees are good for business.

Well-treed districts attract new businesses and tourism. Shoppers are attracted to treed retail areas; as a result, they may visit more often and spend more money each time.

Trees create warmth and beauty.

Neighbourhoods with trees feel friendly and inviting. Trees soften the hard line of sidewalks and buildings and provide visual interest through their vast variety.

Trees help reduce stress.

Trees can help to alleviate traffic noise and motivate drivers to slow down. The sight, sound, touch and smell of trees have a calming effect.

Trees protect and shelter.

Trees reduce the impact of wind, can be used to create visual privacy and provide shelter for a variety of song-birds and butterflies.

Tree Preservation By-law Basics

The Tree Preservation By-law regulating the injury or destruction of trees on private property in the Town of Richmond Hill contains these basic elements:

- With some exemptions, a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) must be obtained prior to the injury or destruction of any tree on private property with a trunk diameter of 20 cm or greater at breast height (1.4 m above the ground)
- In order to destroy / remove a dead, diseased or hazardous tree, a permit is not required; however, an Arborist Certificate must be submitted to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and the Town does not charge a fee in this case
- The Town of Richmond Hill can issue or refuse to grant Permits to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) and can apply conditions to them
- Town By-law officers can issue orders and penalties to enforce the By-law

Anyone who contravenes any provision of the Tree Preservation By-law is guilty of an offence and subject to penalties.

If you suspect an illegal tree removal is taking place, you should call and explain the details to the Town By-law Department at 905 771 0198.

Where Can I Get More Information about the Tree Preservation By-law?

Copies of the Tree Preservation By-law and the following fact sheets are available from the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department at the Municipal Offices located at 225 East Beaver Creek road, at the Operations Centre located at 1200 Elgin Road East or on the Town's web site www.richmondhill.ca.

- Fact Sheet 1.0 Preserving Richmond Hill's Trees
- Fact Sheet 2.0 Obtaining a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s)
- Fact Sheet 3.0 Arborist Reports and Certificates
- Fact Sheet 4.0 Measuring Tree Trunk Diameter at Breast Height
- Fact Sheet 5.0 Guidelines for Construction near Trees

You can request more information by visiting www.richmondhill.ca or by telephone at 905 771 8800.

