

Town of Richmond Hill Tree Preservation By-law Fact Sheet 2.0 Tree Preservation By-law Permit Process

When Must I Apply for a Permit to Injure or Destroy a Tree?

You must obtain a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) prior to the injury or destruction of any tree on private property in the Town of Richmond Hill with a trunk diameter at breast height (DBH) of 20 cm or greater at 1.4 metres above the ground.

You do not have to obtain a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) under the following circumstances:

- to injure or remove any tree(s) with a DBH of less than 20 cm (Guidelines for measuring trunk diameter at breast height can be found in Fact Sheet 4.0.)
- for pruning as defined and described in the By-law for trees that are within certain structures described in the By-law, such as rooftop gardens, solariums and interior courtyards
- for trees in a nursery, fruit tree or other cultivated tree operations, pits or quarries as defined in the By-law
- if a permit is required under the York Region Forest Conservation By-law
- if the injury or destruction is undertaken by the Town, Region, local board, utility corporation or any other authorized government authority
- to remove all or a portion of a dead, diseased, hazardous, or severely injured tree; in this case, you must submit an Arborist Certificate to the Town prior to the work being completed and a fee is not required
- for emergency work to prevent imminent danger, you must submit an Arborist Certificate to the Town after the emergency work is completed and a fee is not required

Refer to Section 3 of the Tree Preservation By-law for the details of these exemptions.

How Do I Obtain a Permit?

You can obtain an Application for a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) from the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department at the Municipal Offices located at 225 East Beaver Creek Road, as well as at the Operations Centre located at 1200 Elgin Road East or from the Town website www.richmondhill.ca. Then take the following steps.

- Fill out the application form completely
- Have a Certified Arborist prepare an Arborist Report on your tree or trees
- Drop off the completed application at either of the locations noted above, and
- Pay the required non-refundable application fee of \$150 for the first tree, plus \$50 for each additional tree

To find a Certified Arborist, you may ask at your local garden centre, check the telephone directory listings for Tree Service or contact the Ontario Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, www.isaontario.com.

Does the Town Ever Waive the Application Fee?

If you are living below the low-income cut off as determined by Statistics Canada, the application fee may be waived. You must submit a written request to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department, including a copy of your income tax statement from the previous year.

When Will the Town *Not* Issue a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s)?

A Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) will not be issued if:

- the Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) application is incomplete
- approval is pending on an application for subdivision approval or consent, rezoning, site plan or official plan amendment related to the property on which the tree is located
- the tree is an endangered or at-risk species
- the tree is a native elm (*Ulmus* sp.) suspected to be resistant to Dutch Elm Disease
- approval would be in contravention of the Tree Preservation By-law, other Town Bylaws or provincial or federal legislation

When *Might* the Town Not Issue a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s)?

At the discretion of the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Culture, a Permit to Injure or Destroy (a) Tree(s) may not be issued if:

- the tree is a native species, with a DBH of more than 20 cm , healthy, and poses no potential threat to safety or property
- the primary reason for requesting removal of the tree is to increase sun exposure, to decrease the amount of organic material falling on a property, reduce interactions with wildlife such as raccoons and squirrels or to accommodate landscape redesign
- the evaluating officer feels that injury or destruction of the tree(s) will have significant negative impacts on community aesthetics and quality of life
- the tree(s) are of historical and / or cultural significance

How Does the Permit Application Review Process Work?

Once it is confirmed that a permit under the York Region Forest Conservation By-law is not required, the Town will accept your completed Tree Preservation By-law Permit Application and assign it to a Tree Preservation By-law Officer. The Officer will review the application package and make a decision regarding whether to grant or deny a permit. A decision will be made within 45 days of your submission.

The Town may attach certain conditions to permits granted under the Tree Preservation By-law. For instance, the Town may require that you plant a tree or trees to replace the one being injured or destroyed.

How Does this By-law Affect the Building Permit Process?

If you are applying for a building permit, you will be required to fill out a Tree Declaration Form indicating whether or not the proposed work is expected to impact trees. Obtaining a building permit does not exempt you from Tree Preservation By-law requirements.

What Do I Do With The Permit Once It Is Granted?

You must post the approved permit in a conspicuous place on the property for the duration of work impacting the tree(s). All Tree Preservation By-law Permits will expire 12 months after they are issued.

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.

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

