

TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH
SAN MATEO COUNTY

Building/Planning Office
650/375-7411
Fax: 650/375-7415



1600 Floribunda Ave.
Hillsborough
California, 94010

Tree Removal Guidelines

Interim – March 2006

“**Tree**” is defined as follows:

Any woody plant which has a trunk with a diameter of twelve inches (12”) or greater, measured at four feet, six inches (4’-6”) above natural grade.

I. Tree Removal Which Is Related to Property Improvements

(in other words, if any site or construction work, including landscaping, is also proposed on the property)

Every tree removal which is related to the construction of property improvements shall be first be submitted, along with the proposed property improvement plans, for design review and approval (by the ADRB or Administratively); then a tree removal permit, issued by the Building Department, is required.

II. Tree Removal Which Is Not Related to Property Improvements

(in other words, if no additional site or construction work is proposed on the property)

A. On lots which have improvements (such as a house): Design review approval (by the ADRB or Administratively), and then a tree removal permit (issued by the Building Department), is required when removing a tree which is on a lot which contains a structure or other improvements and:

1. The trunk is 36” or greater in diameter (circumference 113” or greater), measured at 4’-6” above natural grade; or,
2. The open-market valuation of the project involving the tree removal exceeds \$5,000.00

Applications for the required design review are available in the Planning Department.

B. On Vacant Lots: A tree removal permit, issued by the Building Official (or designated representative), is required when the tree is located on a vacant lot, regardless of the cost of the removal. Submit the following: A site plan showing the location, species, size of the tree(s); an arborist report; a letter indicating why removal is requested, and a proposal for replanting and maintenance. The fee is based on valuation, with a minimum fee of \$100; however, additional fees may be required if the Town’s consulting arborist is required, or if a public notice must be prepared (depending on the scope and nature of the proposed removal).

Immediate Hazards - There is an expedited process if the tree to be removed is an immediate hazard:

A. The applicant shall submit to the Building/Planning Department:

1. A simple site plan showing the location, species, size of the tree (relative to property lines, the house, neighboring properties, the street, etc.);
2. An arborist report indicating that the tree represents an **immediate hazard**;
3. The species and size of the California native replacement tree; and,
4. The fee for this review, which is currently \$50; however, additional fees may be required if the Town’s consulting arborist is required.

B. If the emergency tree removal is granted, the applicant (or the tree removal company) shall then secure from the Building Department the required tree removal permit. Fees are based on valuation. When the work is done and the replacement tree is planted, a final inspection is required.

Notes:

- The removal of Blue Gum Eucalyptus and Baileyanna Acacia trees is encouraged.
- The Hillsborough Municipal Code does not provide regulations or standards for issues between neighbors regarding the trimming of branches of trees that may be overhanging a common property line. Such issues must be resolved between the involved property owners.