
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES GROUP

9611 SE 36TH STREET | MERCER ISLAND, WA 98040

PHONE: 206.275.7605 | www.mercergov.org

Inspection Requests: Online: www.MyBuildingPermits.com VM: 206.275.7730



Non-Development Tree Permit Application

Protecting, enhancing, and maintaining trees are key community values on Mercer Island. Removal of a tree that is not related to development (construction), requires a permit if the tree(s) to be removed

- A. Have a diameter of 10 inches or more, measured at 4.5 feet above the ground
- B. Are “exceptional”, refer to definition on page 6, or
- C. Are located in a critical area¹.

Trees that do not meet this standard (i.e. are less than 10” in diameter, etc.), do not require a permit prior to removal. To maintain tree coverage, replacement trees are also required for trees that are removed.

HOW DO I GET A TREE PERMIT?

Removal of trees that are 10” or greater in diameter but are **not** exceptional, or located in a critical area¹ require a tree permit application. Simply fill out the tree permit application (found on page 2), making sure to include a site plan with the location(s) of the trees to be removed and where replacement trees will be replanted. These permit(s) are typically issued on the same day as submitted and can be obtained at the Permit Counter.

In critical areas¹, removal of trees that are 10” or greater in diameter, or **are** exceptional will require a tree permit application and additional plan review. The completed application and site plan can be submitted at the permit counter. Site plans need to include location of trees to be removed and where replacement trees will be planted. Target times for tree permits that require plan review is typically two weeks. These permits usually require signature of a hold harmless/indemnification agreement. For more information on how to determine whether a tree is located in a critical area or is, considered exceptional refer to pages 5 and 6.

WHAT IF MY TREE IS A HAZARD?

Trees that pose an imminent threat to life or property, such as tree limbs or trunks that are demonstrably cracked, leaning toward overhead utility lines or structures, or are uprooted by flooding, heavy winds or storm events, still require a permit. If you have a hazard tree that needs to be removed immediately, please call us, 206-275-7605, and let us know that you will be removing the hazard tree. Take photos that depict the nature of the hazard.

After the tree has been removed a permit must be applied for within 14 days and include documentation of the hazard, either with a report from a qualified arborist or photographs. Hazard trees that are removed will still need to meet the replanting requirements.

DO I NEED A PERMIT IF I WANT TO TRIM MY TREES?

Pruning or trimming of trees up to a maximum of 25% of the total leaf area through crown thinning, crown cleaning, windowing or crown raising does not require a tree permit, unless in a critical area. Crown topping or any other trimming or pruning that is likely to result in the death or significant damage to the tree is not allowed. Trimming of trees in the right of way is not allowed.

¹ Critical areas include steep slopes, wetlands and buffers, water courses and buffers, and bald eagles nest buffers.

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CITY USE ONLY		
PERMIT #	RECEIPT #	FEE
DATE RECEIVED:		

Non-Development Tree Permit Application

Received By: _____

SITE ADDRESS:

Property Owner *(required)*: _____ Phone: _____

Property Owner Address: _____

Contractor: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Applicant Name: _____ Phone: _____

Description of tree(s) to be cut (tree number from site plan, species, diameter, number of trees to be removed). Attach site plan to application:

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. All work is to be done at the applicant's expense, including clean up and removal of all debris.
2. Standard safety precautions of the tree care industry are to be adhered to at all times.
3. The work is to be performed in such a way as not to do damage to any road surface, overhead or underground utilities.
4. Traffic control is the responsibility of the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the contractor is informed of this. If vehicles or equipment must be placed in the public right-of-way, a Right-of-Way use permit may be required.
5. The City assumes no liability in connection with this action.
6. All traffic lane restrictions and closures require a 24 hour notice to Police Dispatch at **425.577.5656**.
7. This permit is valid for one (1) year from issuance date.

NOTICE TO APPLICANT

In accepting this permit, the permittee, his successors, heirs and assigns agree to protect and hold harmless the City of Mercer Island from all claims, action or damages of every kind and description which may accrue to or suffered by any persons, corporations or property by reason of the performance of the above described work, cost of materials and labor, character of materials used or manner of installation, maintenance and operation, and in case any such suit or action is brought against said City of Mercer Island or damage arising out of or by reason of any of the above causes, the grantee, his successors, heirs or assigns will upon notice to him or them of commencement of such action, defend the same at his or their own sole expense and will fully satisfy any judgement after the said suit or action shall have finally been determined if adversely to the City of Mercer Island.

The city arborist may revoke, annul or terminate this permit if grantee fails to comply with any or all of its provisions, requirement or regulations as herein set forth or through willful or unreasonable neglect, fails to heed or comply with notices given him.

I hereby certify that I am the owner of the subject property or I have been authorized by the owner(s) of the subject property to represent this application and that I have read and examined the application and know the same to be true and correct. All provisions of laws and ordinances governing this type of work will be met whether specified herein or not. The granting of a permit does not presume to give authority to violate or cancel the provisions of any other state or local law regulating construction of the performance of construction.

Signature of Owner/Authorized Agent	Date
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Staff Use Only

Approved:

Staff Name & Title:

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Signature	Date
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MINIMUM SITE PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR A TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

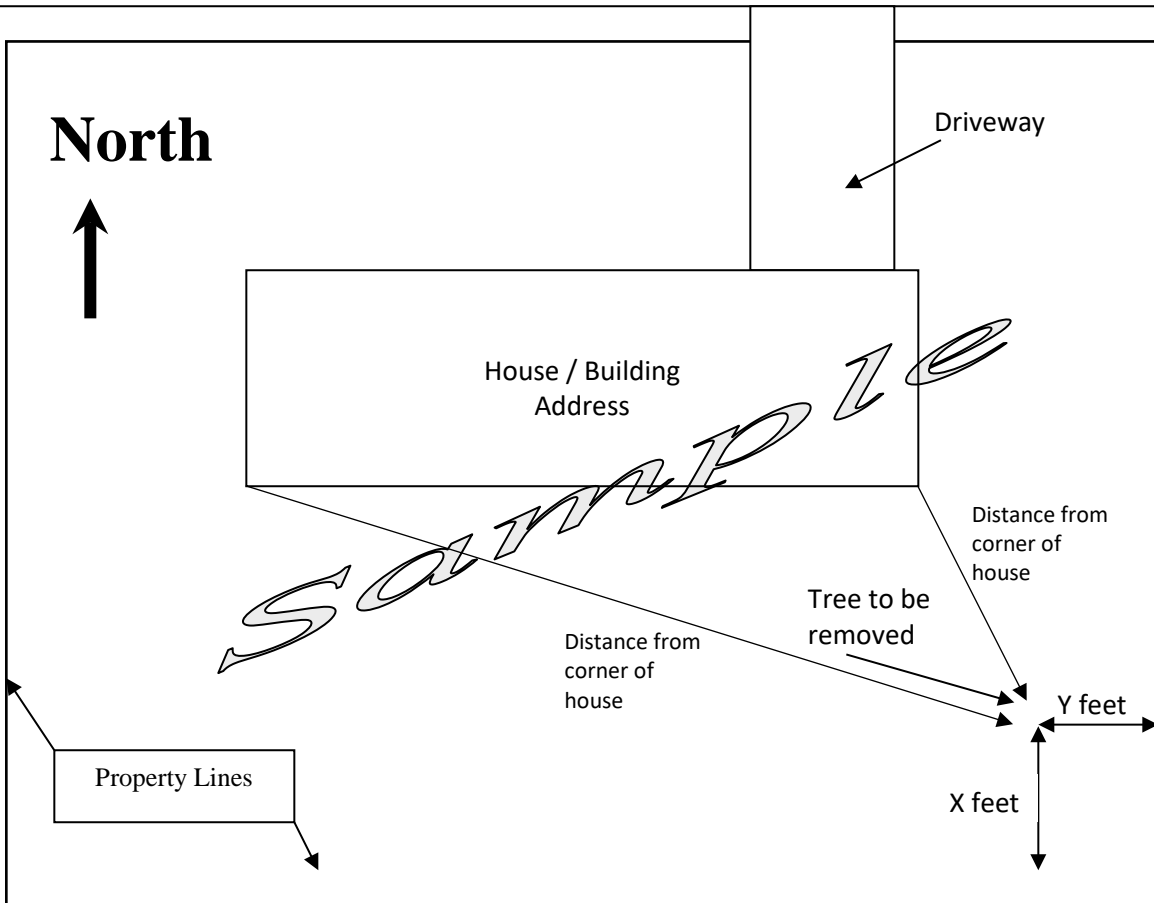
REQUIRED INFORMATION:

1. Applicant Name
2. Street Address
3. Tax Parcel Number
4. North Arrow
5. Approximate location and dimensions of existing buildings, driveways
6. Approximate location of trees to be removed (please include distance from at least two property lines and two building corners- see drawing)
7. Approximate location of any critical areas. Refer to page 5 for information on how to determine this.
8. Number each tree, show diameter (inches at 4.5' above ground) and species
9. Locations of proposed replacement trees

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

Applicant needs to provide site plan specific to parcel. This drawing will not be accepted.

Street Name



HOW DO I MEASURE THE DIAMETER OF A TREE?

Measure the circumference of the tree (the distance all the way around the trunk) at 4.5 feet above the ground and then convert the circumference to diameter.

Reminder: (Diameter = Circumference ÷ 3.14)

HOW MANY TREES WILL I HAVE TO REPLANT?

When trees are cut, replacement trees will need to be planted. Replacements are determined by the diameter of the trees that are removed.

Tree Replacement Ratios	
Diameter of Removed Tree	Number of Replacement Trees Required
Less than 10 inches	1
10 inches up to 24 inches	2
24 inches up to 36 inches	3
More than 36 inches and any exceptional tree(s)	6

To ensure optimal planting conditions for tree survival, replacement trees should be planted in the wet season, October 1 – April 1.

Trees should be replaced if possible near other retained trees creating a grove or stand of trees; outside of critical tree areas.

Trees replaced need to meet these size requirements:

- A. Coniferous trees should be at least 6 feet tall
- B. Deciduous trees should have at least a 1.5 inches in diameter at the base

If smaller trees are demonstrably more suited to the species, on site conditions, or neighborhood character the City Arborist may authorize the planting of smaller sized replacement trees.

Planting of shrubs or bushes do not qualify as replacement of trees.

FEE-IN-LIEU

If the City Arborist determines that there is insufficient area to replant trees either on the site or in the adjacent public-right-of-way, the arborist may authorize the payment of a fee-in-lieu.

The fee-in-lieu amount is based upon the expected tree replacement cost, including labor, materials, and maintenance for each replacement tree, and the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers Guide for Plant Appraisal.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY TREE IS LOCATED IN A CRITICAL AREA?

Click [here](#) to find out more information regarding if your property has critical areas. Just type in your address in the upper left-hand corner of the map in the address box and you will see a map of your property and the surrounding area. Refer to the map legend for critical areas.

HOW MANY TREES DO I HAVE TO RETAIN?

If you are planning on developing (building or rebuilding) your property in the next five years, a minimum of 30% of the total trees with a diameter of 10" or greater and exceptional trees must be retained over a rolling five year period.

Please note: If tree retention requirements are not met, development of the property may be delayed until compliance with tree retention requirements are met. A tree inventory prepared prior to removing any trees is a helpful way to know where your tree retention is.

WHAT IS A TREE INVENTORY?

A tree inventory is a report compiled by a qualified arborist for your property that provides:

- A. Tree Species
- B. Size- including diameter and height
- C. Crown Width
- D. Overall Condition- including health and maintenance needs, overcrowding, possible problems, presence or absence of insects or diseases.
- E. Characters of the site such as soil type and condition, root space and safety should also be listed

CHOOSING A QUALIFIED ARBORIST

Hiring an arborist is a decision that should not be taken lightly. ISA certification indicates the individual has passed ISA's extensive examination on all aspects of tree care and maintenance. Hiring a qualified arborist is an investment in your property. Refer to the [ISA website](#) for more information. Qualified arborists as defined by MICC 19.16 have relevant education and training in arboriculture or urban forestry, having the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Tree Risk Assessment Qualification and at least one (1) of the following credentials:

- 1. ISA Certified Arborist;
- 2. ISA Certified Arborist Municipal Specialist;
- 3. ISA Board Certified Master Arborist;
- 4. American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) registered Consulting Arborist;
- 5. Society of American Foresters (SAF) Certified Forester for Forest Management Plans;

For tree retention reviews associated with a development proposal, a qualified arborist must have, in addition to the above credentials, a minimum of three (3) years experience working directly with the protection of trees during construction and have experience with the likelihood of tree survival after construction. A qualified arborist must also be able to prescribe appropriate measures for the preservation of trees during land development.

WHAT ARE EXCEPTIONAL TREES?

An exceptional tree is a tree that is rare or exceptional by virtue of its size, species, condition, cultural/historical importance, age, and/or contribution as part of a tree grove. They have a diameter of more than 36 inches, or with a diameter that is equal to or greater than the diameter for the species listed in the following Exceptional Tree List.

EXCEPTIONAL TREE LIST

Species	Diameter
Native Species	
Oregon Ash	24 inches
Quaking Aspen	12 inches
Paper Birch	20 inches
Cascara	8 inches
Western Red Cedar	30 inches
Pacific Crabapple	12 inches
Pacific Dogwood	6 inches
Douglas Fir	30 inches
Grand Fir	24 inches
Black Hawthorn	6 inches
Western Hemlock	24 inches

Pacific Madrone	6 inches
Big Leaf Maple	30 inches
Dwarf or Rocky Mountain Maple	6 inches
Vine Maple	8 inches
Oregon White or Garry Oak	6 inches
Lodgepole Pine	6 inches
Shore Pine	12 inches
Western White Pine	24 inches
Western Serviceberry	6 inches
Sitka Spruce	6 inches
Willow (all native species)	8 inches
Pacific Yew	6 inches

Non-Native Species	
Orchard (Common) Apple	20 inches
European Ash	22 inches
Green Ash	30 inches
Raywood Ash	24 inches
European Beech	30 inches
European White Birch	24 inches
Atlas Cedar	30 inches
Deodor Cedar	30 inches
Incense Cedar	30 inches
Flowering Cherry	23 inches
Lawson Cypress	30 inches
Kousa Dogwood	12 inches
Eastern Dogwood	12 inches
American Elm	30 inches
English Elm	30 inches
Gingko	24 inches
Common Hawthorn	16 inches
Washington Hawthorn	9 inches
European Hornbeam	16 inches
Katsura	30 inches
Littleleaf Linden	30 inches
Honey Locust	20 inches
Southern Magnolia	16 inches
Paperbark Maple	12 inches
Japanese Maple	12 inches
Red Maple	25 inches
Sugar Maple	30 inches
Sycamore Maple	24 inches
Monkey Puzzle Tree	22 inches
Mountain-Ash	29 inches
Pin Oak	30 inches
Red Oak	30 inches
Callery Pear	13 inches
Austrian Black Pine	24 inches

Ponderosa Pine	30 inches
Scot's Pine	24 inches
London Plane	30 inches
Flowering Plum	21 inches
Costal Redwood	30 inches
Giant Sequoia	30 inches
Japanese Snowbell	12 inches
American Sweetgum	27 inches
Tulip Tree	30 inches
Willow (All non-native species)	24 inches