

Tree Removal

Approved by: County Council

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Replaces: Tree and Brush Maintenance Policy

Procedure Number: MS-TS-006-001 **Parent Policy:** MS-TS-006

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References and Related Documents

Section 6.2 of the Municipal Act

[Municipal Act 2001](#)

[Tree Removal Policy](#)

Policy Statement

The County of Grey has the responsibility to remove trees and tree branches that pose a safety hazard to the users of County Roads.

In accordance to Section 62 in the Municipal Act, the County has the right to remove decayed, damaged or dangerous trees or branches of trees on or adjoining County Roads if, in the opinion of the County, the trees or branches pose a danger to the health or safety of any person using the road.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide the Transportation Services Department with direction for removing trees and parts of trees on County owned road right-of-ways, as well as, on private property adjacent to County Roads. In addition, it identifies a protocol for informing adjacent property owners of the removal of trees and potential compensation for trees removed.

Scope

Trees within and adjacent to County road right-of-ways can create a hazard to motorists and other road users or hamper road components such as drainage. To enhance the safety of the road users and longevity of the road facility this policy addresses the following:

- Determination of Work;
- The hierarchy of tree removal;
- Communications;
- Compensation.

Determining Work

While patrolling Grey County Roads, the Area Foremen will inventory trees and parts of trees that have potential to fall onto road surfaces, reduce site visibility at intersections, impede winter maintenance activities, have a negative effect on the infrastructure, such as ditches or structures, or are within the Clear Zone, as identified in the Roadside Safety Manual. These locations and identified problems will be summarized and submitted to the Manager of Maintenance.

In addition, the Manager of Engineering will inventory the locations of the trees that are recommended to be removed to accommodate ditching and construction work. The Manager of Engineering will also identify trees that are within the Clear Zone, as identified in the Roadside Safety Manual within projects on the County's five (5) year work program.

Hierarchy of Tree Removal

It is recognized that the amount of trees to be removed annually may exceed the capacity of available resources. The Maintenance Manager will prioritize the trees that have been identified for removal or trimming, based on the following hierarchy:

- Dead trees or parts of trees that have potential for falling on Grey Roads driving lanes;
- Healthy trees that canopy Grey Roads and are causing a potential hazard;
- Trees that are compromising the integrity of infrastructure, such as ditches or bridges;
- Trees within the Clear Zone of planned construction projects;
- Trees that are negatively affecting winter maintenance operations;

- Trees that are within the Clear Zone of non-construction projects.

The Maintenance Manager may use the services of the Tree Cutting Lead Hand or a third party expert to assess the health of a tree.

There will be occasions when trees that require removal are identified through the year from various sources that will be included in the annual plan.

Communications

The County shall identify the areas where tree cutting will occur on its internet site at least two (2) weeks before trees are removed. However, in emergency situations the tree cutting locations may not be identified on the internet site.

A) Trees on Private Property Adjacent to a Grey County Road

When a tree or portion of a tree that is located on private property adjoining a Grey County Road right-of-way requires removal or trimming, Grey County staff will attempt to contact the property owner to advise them of the County's intentions and rationale. A letter will be forwarded to the property owner and a letter will be left at the residence identifying the County's intent at least four (4) weeks prior to the work being undertaken. The letter will provide a contact name, telephone number, email address and an approximate date when the work will be completed.

B) Trees within County Road Allowance

When a tree located on a County Road right-of-way, having a caliper of 0.3 m or larger, is identified for cutting and a property owner is maintaining the property (cutting the grass) to the tree. A letter will be left at the residence identifying the County's intent to cut all or a portion of a tree, at least four (4) weeks prior to the work being undertaken. The letter will provide a contact name, telephone number, email address and an approximate date when the work will be completed.

An orange X will be marked on each tree to be removed at least two (2) weeks prior to the removal of a tree as identified in A and B.

Compensation

No compensation will be provided to property owners adjoining a County Road for trees removed from the County-owned road right-of-way.

The Director of Transportation Services has the authority to authorize the planting of a new tree to replace a tree removed from private property adjoining a County Road, if the tree to be removed has a trunk caliper of at least 0.3 m at the stump and the principle residence is within 50 m of the tree that has been cut.

The species of the newly planted tree mutually agreed upon by the property owner and the County of Grey with a maximum value of \$200. All trees will be planted on private property within 5 m of where the cut tree was located. The property owner shall be responsible for the maintenance of the trees and the County will not warranty the replacement trees.

The County will cut the wood into lengths of approximately 1.5 m and leave the wood within the county road allowance for the home owner's use (for trees cut on both private property and Grey County owned road right-of-ways). If the wood is not removed within seven (7) days of the cutting, the County will make arrangements to have the wood removed.