

Guide to the Colwood “Urban Forest Bylaw”

The interim “Urban Forest Bylaw” was adopted to preserve trees on private and City owned property, and to assist in the replacement and growing of the City’s urban forest. To cut or remove a tree from your property may require a Tree Management Permit.

The “Urban Forest Bylaw” establishes the authority for the City to issue permits and to set related fees, including requirements for replacement trees and security for their provisions and maintenance. The bylaw also provides provisions to prevent unnecessary harm to trees during construction.

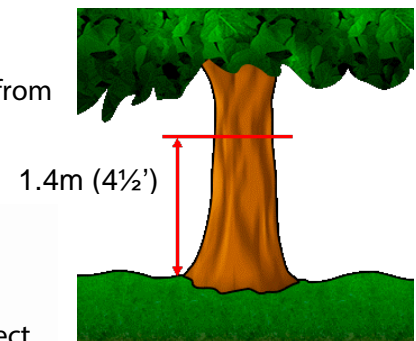
When do I need a permit?

A permit is required to remove or cut a protected tree. Protected trees include:

- Trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 20 cm or greater when measured at chest height (1.4 metres above the base of the tree) or
- Trees with more than one stem at 1.4 metres above grade and the combined diameter of its two largest trunks or stems is 20 centimetres or greater or
- Trees with evidence of nesting birds or
- Trees that do not meet the size requirements but were a condition of a plan or permit approval or
- Trees that form a hedge that is greater than 5 meters high or
- Trees on all City owned lands including boulevards, streets, parks and open spaces.

How do I measure the diameter of a tree?

To obtain the DBH, measure the circumference of the tree at 1.4m (4½’) from the ground and divide by 3.142.



When is a permit not required?

Permits are not required to remove or cut a tree when:

- A tree does not qualify as a protected tree
- A tree must be cut in response to an emergency in order to protect public safety or private property (conditions still apply related to replacement of such trees)
- A permit is not required to prune a tree in accordance with sound arboricultural practices.
- A hedge with five or more trees less than 5m in height and 1.25m apart

Pruning does not include: lift pruning of lower limbs such that the live crown ratio is less than 50%, removal of more than 25% of the crown in one season, topping, or pruning or removal of a structural root within the critical root zone.

What if a tree is in imminent danger of falling?

In the event that a protected tree is in imminent danger of falling and injuring persons or property due to natural causes, and it is not possible to obtain a permit prior to the tree falling, the owner may cut the tree or have it cut, but shall report the cutting of the tree to the City within the next business day along with a photograph of the tree prior to such cutting.

The owner shall not remove the tree from the lot until the city has attended the site and has confirmed the tree was in imminent danger of falling. In this instance, the trees that are cut must be replaced in accordance with the City's Tree Regulation and Protection Bylaw. If the City determines that the tree was not in imminent danger of falling, or was in imminent danger of falling due to reasons other than natural causes, the owner may be subject to the offences and penalties.

Do I need to plant replacement trees?

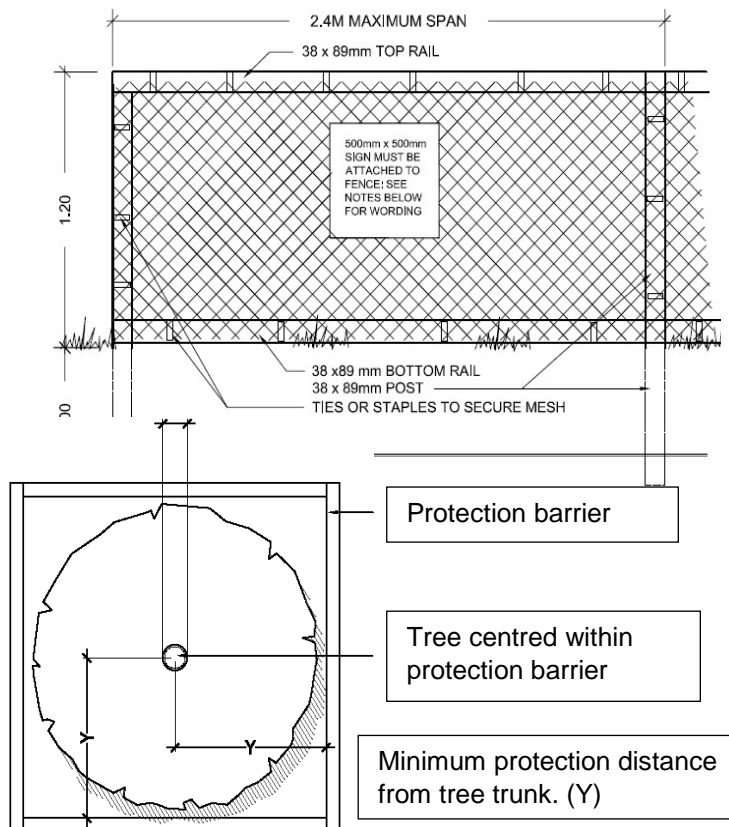
Replacement trees are to be planted on the same lot as the tree removals. If the replacement tree cannot be planted, the deposit will be allocated to a fund to plant replacement trees elsewhere in the community. Replacement trees must conform to the City of Colwood's standards with respect to species and size.

How is tree cutting inspected and assessed?

If a contravention of Urban Forest Bylaw occurs in a location where excavation, construction or other development is occurring, a "Stop Work Order" may be placed on the property. This will halt all work associated with the tree cutting or tree damaging activity until the contravention is resolved to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning.

How must trees be protected during construction?

Protected trees within 4m from any excavation, demolition, construction, fill or engineering works must be protected with a tree protection barrier before a building, demolition, or fill permit is issued.



Trunk diameter (cm)	Minimum protection distance (Y) (m from trunk)
X	6X
20	1.2
25	1.5
30	1.8
35	2.1
40	2.4
45	2.7
50	3.0
55	3.3
60	3.6
75	4.5
90	5.0
100	6.0