



# STREET TREE PERMIT INSTRUCTIONS

## STREET TREE PERMIT APPLICATION

To apply for the required permit, fill out the application completely and legibly. Submit the **signed** application to: Department of Public Works, City of Allentown, 641 S 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Allentown, PA. 18103. **Incomplete, illegible, or unsigned** applications **will not** be processed. Please allow a minimum of 10 working days for inspection. Public Works will notify you as to the issuance or denial of the requested permit. Both the property owner and contractor must obtain a copy of the permit before work commences. Tree permits expire 60 days from the issue date. Except the planting or replacement of trees, all tree work, including grinding the stump, removing the chips, and filling the hole with topsoil, must be completed within 60 days or a new permit will be required.

Either the legal title property owner or the contractor who is under contract with the legal title property owner may apply for a tree permit to perform work on trees growing on public property. **PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 2 OF THIS DOCUMENT TO SEE WHO IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN PERMITS.** Public property trees may be found growing not only in parks and around public buildings, but trees growing along city streets within the right-of-way are also considered public property trees. Land between private property lines set aside for use by the general public for pedestrian and vehicular use is considered a right-of-way. A typical city right-of-way includes the sidewalk, the parkway or tree lawn (the planting area between the curb and sidewalk), the curb, and the roadway. Sometimes a right-of-way may be missing one of these features and it's difficult to tell if the tree is on private or public property. If you're not sure whether the tree in question is within the right-of-way, contact the Department of Public Works at 610-437-7574 for assistance.

**POST A COPY OF THE TREE PERMIT NEAR THE FRONT ENTRANCE OF PROPERTY SO THAT IT IS VISIBLE FROM THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY (USE PROPERTY OWNER COPY)**

**CALL THE BUREAU OF ENGINEERING WITHIN 10 DAYS OF COMPLETION OF THE WORK DESCRIBED IN THE PERMIT SO THAT AN INSPECTION MAY BE SCHEDULED. IF REPLACEMENT TREES ARE REQUIRED, CALL AFTER THE REPLACEMENT TREE HAS BEEN PLANTED. LEAVE NURSERY TAGS ON NEWLY PLANTED TREES UNTIL INSPECTION IS COMPLETED.**

The following are some of the reasons for a failed final inspection:

- Stump and exposed roots not sufficiently ground down
- Wood chips left in the right-of-way
- Tree planted too close to existing infrastructure
- Planted area or tree well size does not conform to permit specifications
- Incorrect species planted - permit will specify species selected by the City forester
- Root flare not visible at base of tree - tree planted too deep
- Tree does not meet replacement size caliper standards
- Tree has damage
- Poor form - tree has no established central leader, co-dominant leaders, branches are too low, poor crown to stem ratio
- Tree not planted according to City Standards - incorrectly staked, wrappings not removed, plastic or wire used instead of arbor tie

All tree work must be done in accordance with the current Arboricultural Specifications and Standards of Practice for the City of Allentown and comply with Article 911 of the 1962 Codified Ordinances. Permit applications and a list of tree contractors licensed to work on public property trees are available on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor at the Public Works Department, 641 S 10<sup>th</sup> St., Allentown, PA or on the City website at <https://www.allentownpa.gov/en-us/Government/Authorities-Boards-Commissions-Councils/Shade-Tree-Commission>



A permit is required for any of the following activities:

- A. **Planting trees.** A permit is required to plant trees in the public right-of-way. **A City-licensed ISA tree contractor is not required** for tree planting. Refer to the Street Tree selection and planting brochure for tree planting guidelines and the City standard planting detail. **Trees SHALL be 2 – 2 ½ inches in caliper measured at 6 inches above the root flare.** Trees shall have a single, straight trunk with the first permanent branch at a minimum of seven feet (7') above the root flare. We strongly recommend you buy from a quality nursery and seek professional assistance when planting trees. Optimum planting times are: Spring - March 1 to May 31; Fall - October 1 to December 31. **PLEASE PLANT ACCORDINGLY**
- B. **Pruning trees.** A permit is required to perform pruning and other work on trees or shrubs growing in the public right-of-way. In addition, **a City-licensed ISA tree contractor is required** to perform such work on trees growing on public property. All pruning must be performed to the City's Arboricultural Specifications and Standards of Practice.
- C. **Pesticide/Fertilizer or other Applications.** A permit is required to apply pesticide or fertilizer on a street tree in the public right-of-way. **A City-licensed ISA tree contractor is required** to perform this type of work in the public right-of-way. Pesticide application shall **only** be performed by those holding a Pennsylvania Pesticide Applicator's License. This work could consist of root flare excavation, pesticide application, fertilizer application, spray application, soil application or injection, and any other application.
- D. **Removal.** A permit is required to remove a street tree in the public right of way. In addition, **a City-licensed ISA tree contractor is required** to perform such work. **Check the requirements for a replacement tree.**
- E. **Stump Grinding.** A permit is required to grind a stump in the public right-of-way. **A City-licensed ISA tree contractor is not required** for such work. We recommend consulting with a City-licensed ISA tree contractor before work is performed. A PA OneCall number (811) is required before stump grinding. When stump grinding, proper public protection is required. **Check tree requirement for a replacement tree:**
  - a. When a replacement tree is to be planted in the same location as the removal, stump and exposed roots must be ground down to a sufficient depth to allow for the new root ball (usually 18" to 24"). The grindings must be removed from the right-of-way and the hole must be filled with sufficient acceptable topsoil.
  - b. When no replacement tree is required or when the replacement tree is to be planted some distance from the removal, the stump and exposed roots from the removal must be ground down a minimum of four inches (4") below the ground surface, the wood chips removed, and the hole filled with acceptable topsoil sufficient to level of the



surrounding grade (allow for settling). Seeding with a good quality perennial grass seed is required if replacement trees are not being planted in the same place as the removal.

- F. Replacement Trees.** All removals SHALL be replaced as directed by the City forester as part of Public Works within 6 months of the issued date on the approved permit. See A above for planting requirements. **Failure to provide proper replacement trees with the 6-month time period shall be considered a violation of Article 911 of the 1962 Codified Ordinances.**

**ATTENTION: REPLACEMENT TREES NOT PLANTED WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF THE ISSUE DATE ON THE REMOVAL PERMIT OR REPLACEMENTS THAT DO NOT MEET CITY STANDARDS MAY BE REPLACED BY THE CITY. AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE PLUS ALL OTHER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REPLACEMENT SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROPERTY OWNER ON RECORD.**

- G. Trees, Tree Roots, and Sidewalk Replacement.** Applications requesting tree removal associated with sidewalk work require a work order permit number from the Bureau of Engineering and a PA One Call number. The sidewalk must be removed, and the roots exposed (using hand tools or an air spade) in such a manner as to not cause damage or destroy any tree in the public area. Tree removal will only be considered if no other acceptable alternative is available.

### Right-of-Way Regulations

- 1) The applicant must provide proper insurance and show that the City has been named as an additional insured. If the applicant's insurance shall be cancelled at any time during the life of the permit, the permit shall also be revoked.
- 2) The permit is to be granted only to those persons who have legal title to the land directly abutting the area of the street, sidewalk, lane, alley, pavement, footway, of right-of-way where work is to be performed.
- 3) It shall be the applicant's responsibility to always maintain the permit use area of the public right-of-way in the orderly manner. The applicant must agree to be responsible for the repair of any damage including sidewalks caused by the applicant and/or other person performing work as part of this permit.
- 4) No heavy and/or concentrated loads shall be placed on the sidewalk or any other public right-of-way that will cause any damage.
- 5) The issuance of a permit by the Department of Public Works to occupy a location in the public right-of-way shall not in itself supersede other applicable City Ordinances, such as those of Zoning, Health, Fire, noise, disorderly conduct, and nuisances.
- 6) The issuance of a permit shall in no way allow the holder to move, remove, attach to, alter, etc. any sidewalks, light standards, bollards, or any other public street fixtures.
- 7) It is the applicant's responsibility to request any necessary NO PARKING signs at the location. All such requests must be made through the ALLENTOWN PARKING AUTHORITY. All traffic control shall comply with PennDOT publication 213.
- 8) Failure to abide by any of the above rules shall be cause to revoke the permit without refund of the fee and may be subject to penalties as prescribed in Article 911 of the 1962 Codified Ordinances.