



UNDERSTANDING THE **TREE REMOVAL MORATORIUM**

On September 8, 2016, City Council imposed a six-month moratorium on tree removals (Ordinance 1141) in response to community concerns about recent tree removal activity. The moratorium ordinance was amended on September 22, 2016 to address additional situations (Ordinance 1143) which might endanger life or property. This moratorium was put into place to limit tree removals while the Planning Commission and Council work on amending the City's tree regulations to provide for better protection measures.

What does the moratorium mean?

No person or entity may remove a tree in Lake Forest Park unless it meets one of the criteria discussed below.



Trees Less than 6 inches Wide (and not in a sensitive area or buffer)

No permit is required for removal of trees that are not in an environmentally sensitive area and less than 6 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH, 54 inches above the ground). Check with the Planning Department to find out if your tree is in a sensitive area or buffer. To ensure the tree meets this criteria, wrap a tape measure around the trunk at chest height. This measurement must be less than 18-3/4 inches (circumference/3.14 = diameter). Take photos of your measurements prior to removal.

Dead Trees

Dead trees may be removed without a permit. A dead tree does not have a live crown or functioning vascular tissue. Contact the Planning Department for confirmation of exemption prior to removal.

One or Two Significant Trees (and not in a sensitive area or buffer)

Up to two significant trees (more than 6" DBH but less than 28" DBH) may be permitted to be removed on any property, provided that the trees are not located in an environmentally sensitive area or its buffer, and trees have not been removed within the past three years. Submit a permit application to the Planning Department to begin the process.

Emergency Situations

In situations where it is necessary to remedy an immediate threat to safety, welfare or property by an extreme-risk tree, action may be taken prior to applying for a permit. Any person undertaking emergency tree removal must notify the Planning Department within one working day following commencement of the emergency

action and submit a permit application for the work performed. That application must be accompanied by photos and measurements taken prior to, during, and after removal. Any tree removals found not be the result of a genuine emergency situation will be subject to a code enforcement action.

What if I suspect a tree could fall and harm people or property?

The removal of dangerous trees may be permitted under certain conditions. For removal of more than two significant trees in a three-year period, trees over 28” DBH, or trees in environmentally sensitive areas, removal can only be permitted if the applicant submits a report from an ISA-certified arborist based on ISA 2013 Best Management Practices which finds that the trees are:

- a. extreme risk
- b. high risk
- c. moderate risk with severe consequences
- d. moderate risk with significant consequences

Information about these risk categories can be found below. To begin the process submit a permit application and arborist report to the Planning Department. You may request the report be prepared by the City Arborist.

Find a certified arborist at www.treesaregood.org/findanarborist

ISA International Society of Arboriculture

Table of Tree Risk Assessment (from the ISA 2013 Best Management Practices)

Level of risk based on the likelihood of a tree failing and impacting a target (people, vehicles, structures, landscaping, etc.) and severity of the associated consequences.

Likelihood of Failure and Impact	CONSEQUENCES			
	<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minor</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Severe</i>
<i>Very likely</i>	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
<i>Likely</i>	Low	Moderate	High	High
<i>Somewhat likely</i>	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate
<i>Unlikely</i>	Low	Low	Low	Low

Extreme – Situations in which failure is *imminent* and there is a *high* likelihood of impacting a target, and the consequences of failure are *severe*.

High – Situations in which consequences are *significant* and likelihood is *very likely* or *likely*, or consequences are *severe* and likelihood is *likely*.

Moderate – Situations in which consequences are *minor* and likelihood is *very likely* or *likely*; or likelihood is *somewhat likely* and consequences are *significant* or *severe*.

Low – Situations in which consequences are *negligible* and the likelihood is *unlikely*, or consequences are *minor* and likelihood is *somewhat likely*.

What if I have a tree removal permit but haven't started work yet?

If you were issued a tree permit and that tree permit has not expired, you may proceed with the removal. Prior to starting the tree removal call the Planning Department so we can inform anyone calling with concerns that you have a permit.

What do I do if I suspect a tree is being cut down without a permit?

Call the Lake Forest Park Planning Department at (206) 368-5440. If the removal occurs outside of normal business hours, contact the Lake Forest Park Police Department at 911.

What are the consequences of violating the moratorium?

Any person or entity found to have removed trees in violation of the moratorium faces a fine equal to the appraised value of the tree, and an additional fine of up to \$5,000. Tree valuations can reach into the tens of thousands of dollars.

When will the moratorium end?

The current moratorium will expire on March 22, 2017, though City Council may extend the moratorium for an additional six months if necessary. The Planning Commission and City Council are currently working to establish new tree regulations. When the new regulations take effect, the moratorium will most likely be lifted.