

Clearing, Grading & Earthwork

DEVELOPMENT & USE REVIEW

If you are preparing to do any clearing, grading, paving or some other form of earthwork on your property, this bulletin can help you to determine what land use regulations apply to your site. **Please note** that work conducted within a critical area such as streams, steep slopes, wetlands, or their buffers, will likely require a [Critical Area Work Permit](#). Removal of any tree greater than 6" DBH (diameter at breast height) will require a [Tree Removal Permit](#).

WHEN IS A PERMIT REQUIRED?

A **Major** Clearing and Grading Permit will be required for any of the following activities:

- Clearing, grading, filling, or excavation which requires the use of a bulldozer, back-hoe, bobcat or other similar riding earth-moving equipment
- Moving 50 cubic yards or more of material
- Adding 250 square feet or more of impervious surface area
- Installing any drainage system that conveys water offsite or creates a new connection to the City stormwater system
- Clearing 2,000 square feet or more of land

Approval of activities requiring Major Clearing and Grading Permits requires a [Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan](#) in accordance with section [16.08.070](#) of the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code.

A **Minor** Clearing and Grading Permit will be required for any of the following activities:

- Clearing, filling, excavation or grading activities of more than 25 cubic yards but less than 50 cubic yards of material
- Adding more than 100 but less than 250 square feet of impervious surface area
- Clearing more than 500 but less than 2000 square feet of land

Activities under Minor Clearing and Grading Permits must meet the abbreviated Erosion Sediment Control requirements in Appendix C.3 of the [King County Surface Water Design Manual](#).

WHEN IS A PERMIT NOT REQUIRED?

A Clearing and Grading Permit is **not** required for any of the following activities (Note: other permits may still be required):

- Removal of dead or diseased trees or groundcover or removal required by emergency situations involving immediate danger to life or property
- Routine vegetation maintenance and removal of trees (less than six inches in diameter) or groundcover on developed lots provided these activities are:
 - Done for general property and utility maintenance landscaping or gardening
 - Involve 25 cubic yards of material or less
 - Do not involve clearing more than 500 square feet of land that has a slope of 15% or less
- Routine driveway and walkway maintenance, provided it does not result in an increase of impervious area
- The removal of [invasive and noxious weeds](#) as listed by state and county agencies – including English ivy, Himalayan blackberry and Evergreen blackberry – with hand labor and light equipment
- Clearing, grading, filling, sandbagging or similar work during or after periods of extreme weather or other emergency conditions

Exemptions do **not** apply to any land clearing which includes the use of a bulldozer or similar earth-moving equipment. Clearing and grading on vacant lots which is not specifically exempt under 16.08.040 will require a major clearing and grading permit



ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- For any digging of 12” or more it is required to mark the boundary of the digging/excavation site with white paint and call the [Washington Utility Notification Center](#) at 811 to locate underground facilities. Owners/operators of underground facilities must respond within 2 business days. Liability for any damages of an underground facility, as a consequence of the failure to fulfill this obligation, will be the responsibility of the owner/contractor. Fines may also be imposed for those who fail to comply. [RCW Chapter 19.122](#)
- If any of the work, including preliminary studies, is to be done in an environmentally critical area or its buffers, a Critical Area Work Permit is required

Questions?

For more information, please contact the Planning Department

[Calvin Killman](#)

206-957-2815

[Permit Tech](#)

206-957-2813

Access to Information

Electronic versions of all forms, permits, applications, and codes are available on the Lake Forest Park website:

<http://www.cityofflp.com/>

Paper copies of all of the above are available at City Hall:
17425 Ballinger Way Northeast, Lake Forest Park, WA 98155
206-368-5440

DISCLAIMER: This information is meant to provide general information and guidance into basic land clearing, grading, excavating, and filling requirements in accordance with official City regulations only and is not intended to be a substitute for the actual codes. These requirements can and do sometimes change after action by the City Council. Interested parties should always verify current requirements with the City Planning and Building Department.