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Tree Permits and the Tree Protection Ordinance

In 1992 Ventura County adopted the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance. The ordinance applies to the pruning (beyond specified limits), removal, trenching, excavation, or other encroachment into the protected zone (5' outside the canopy's edge and a minimum of 15' from the trunk) of protected trees in unincorporated areas (land outside of cities).

Protected trees include all oaks and sycamores 9.5" in circumference or larger (measured 4.5' above ground), trees of any species with a historical designation, trees of any species 90" in circumference or larger, and most 9.5" native trees in the Scenic Resources Protection Zone.

Before any protected tree is trimmed, removed, or encroached upon, property owners should **contact the Planning Division** to ensure these activities are conducted in compliance with the Tree Protection Ordinance. A permit is required

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for many of these activities. The forms and information below provide more information.

Report Tree Protection Ordinance Violations

[Click here](#)

Submittal Requirements for (all) Tree Permits and Authorizations (Tree Doc A)

This handout should be your starting point. It summarizes the tree protection requirements and procedures, and clarifies what type of documentation must be submitted with the different types of tree-related requests. If you have questions on any of the items below, refer back to this document.

Frequently Asked Questions

This document further clarifies tree protection requirements and procedures.

Ministerial Tree Permit Application (Tree Doc M)

Most tree-related requests involve a ministerial tree permit. This document includes an application and instructions.

Performance Standards for Ministerial Tree Permits (Tree Doc M-PS)

When ministerial tree permits are issued, it is with the understanding that certain performance standards will be adhered to and these standards are attached to the permit. These performance standards cover such things as tree protection fencing, tree protection zone restrictions and required tree pruning methods.

Arborist Verifications

For ministerial tree permits and tree authorization letters, only targeted information must be provided from an arborist. These "arborist verifications" must be submitted on the County's Arborist Verification forms. There are five categories of arborist verification, which provide targeted information. These include:

Arborist Verification of Dead Tree (Tree Form M1)

Confirms that a tree is dead, and if the death was not from natural causes provides information on why the tree died.

Arborist Verification of Major Pruning for Tree Health (Tree Form M2)

Confirms that any proposed major pruning is for the health or stability of the tree. Major pruning involves pruning limbs or roots that are greater than 20 percent of the tree's girth or pruning that overall will amount to more than 20 percent of the trees canopy or root system.

Arborist Verification of Hazardous or Conflicting Tree (Tree Form M3)

Confirms a tree's hazardous condition or that the tree is conflicting with existing structures or trees.

Arborist Verification of Tree Status (Tree Form M4)

Used to confirm various site conditions, such as that tree removal or pruning is justified to allow reasonable access to a property or reasonable use of a property.

Arborist Verification of Tree Protection Measures (Tree Form M5)

Confirms that tree protection measures, such as fencing, are in place.

Content Requirements for Arborist Reports (Tree Doc D-AR)

Comprehensive arborist reports are only required for discretionary tree permits. This document outlines the specific information required in arborist reports submitted to the County. The purpose is to ensure that the Planning Division receives the specific information needed to make a decision about a given request, that the information is clear and easily found in the report, and that the applicant and arborist understand what is required versus optional information. Arborist reports that do not substantially adhere to these guidelines will be rejected as inadequate.

Content Requirements for Tree Protection Plans (Tree Doc D-TPP)

If a protected tree requires protection during construction (on discretionary permits), or if a project is proposing to fell or transplant protected trees, then an arborist-prepared Tree Protection Plan must be submitted to address remaining tree protection or tree offsets/mitigation. This document outlines the specific information required in these plans. Tree Protection Plans are important documents that are intended to encapsulate most of the required construction protection measures, mitigation, offsets, and ongoing monitoring that may be involved with a

project. Tree Protection Plans that do not substantially adhere to these requirements will be rejected as inadequate.

Section 8107-25 of the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance
(Tree Protection Ordinance)

The actual language of the Tree Protection Ordinance.

Tree Protection Guidelines

The County also adopted Tree Protection Guidelines which supplement the ordinance and further explain and amplify the ordinance requirements. Included are approval standards for both ministerial and discretionary tree permits, how the value of a tree may be determined, and alternative methods of mitigation for removed trees.

List of Certified Tree Trimmers

This is a list of tree trimmers who have pledged that they have read and understand Ventura County's Tree Protection Regulations and Tree Protection Guidelines as well as the International Standards of Arboriculture (ISA) Pruning Standards. Inclusion on this list should not be construed to be a recommendation from the Planning Division.

Form for Certification as a Qualified Tree Trimmer

Form to register for the above list.

Scenic Resource Protection Overlay Map

Additional species of trees are protected in the County's Scenic Resource Protection Overlay zone. This map shows where those areas are in the County.

Historical Trees in Ventura County

Trees that have a historical designation are protected by the Tree Protection Regulations. There are not many, but this is the list.

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