

# Street Trees FAQ

## **Am I allowed to remove or prune a street tree myself?**

The City's local laws specify it is an offence to prune or remove a street tree without prior approval from the City. All street tree maintenance activities are required to be carried out by the City's authorised personnel.

## **Can I request a street tree be removed?**

Council policy allows for the removal of street trees in certain circumstances. These include where a street tree is dead, dangerous, and/or diseased or where the property owner has been granted approval (through a nature strip development permit) for development purposes. Other than where a tree is dead, all requests for street tree removal must be in writing addressed to the Manager Parks Services or, where development is involved, included in a Nature Strip Development Application.

## **What if my new house design requires a street tree be removed?**

Council policy requires all development proposals consider and accommodate established street trees where reasonable. Prior to planning approval Council promotes consultation between the City and developers with the view to adjusting plans to accommodate existing mature street trees. The City will generally only approve street tree removal for development purposes where there is consultation as part of the initial planning process. Failure to consult with the City on street tree removal prior to submitting for Planning Approval may result in delaying approvals and / or a requirement to amend plans if removal is refused after submission of a Nature Strip Development Application.

## **Would the City refuse to approve removal of a street tree if requested?**

Council policy specifies a number of circumstances that are not considered acceptable reasons for street tree removal. The below reasons are generally not considered justification for removal of established street trees:

- leaf, flower, nut or bark falling or accumulating or being blown by the wind;
- enhancement or protection of views;
- reduction or eradication of shading to gardens, lawns, pools or dwellings; or
- an individual preference for an alternative species or a desire to re-landscape.

## **If a street tree is causing me inconvenience will the City remove it?**

Generally not, some inconvenience from street trees is considered a necessary consequence of living in a district where street trees provide significant benefit to residents and the broader community.

## **What programmed pruning does the City carry out on street trees?**

The City programmes periodical pruning of street trees to:

- promote tree health and structural integrity;
- maintain statutory clearances; and
- minimise the risk of damage to property and injury to people.

Where the City undertakes programmed pruning, this is done at no cost to residents.

## **Can I request a street tree be pruned?**

The City considers requests for street tree pruning on a case by case basis. If you request pruning of a street tree and it is not related to tree health, safety, boundary encroachment or statutory clearance, the City will generally only approve the pruning if it deemed appropriate and where the resident agrees to cover all costs. If you have a concern about any aspect of a street tree you can contact the City's Parks Coordinator (Arboriculture) to discuss maintenance options.

## **When would the City refuse to approve pruning of a street tree?**

The City will not carry out pruning activities considered as being detrimental to long term tree health or safety. Severe pruning is generally not considered as being an acceptable or suitable practice for maintaining street trees and will only be applied where statutory pruning requires this. The City will generally not approve street tree pruning to maintain or enhance views.

## **What will the City do if fruit, nuts or leaves from street trees are collecting on my driveway or crossover?**

Driveway and crossover maintenance, including sweeping and cleaning, is the responsibility of the property owner. Where the wind blows fruits, nuts or leaves from street trees the City is not legally obligated to remove these from private property or the crossover.

## **Whose responsibility is it to prune a street tree which is growing into power lines?**

It is the City's responsibility to prune street trees growing into power lines. The City carries out powerline clearance pruning in accordance with Western Power requirements once annually at no cost to residents.

## **How can I find out if a species of tree which I want to grow on the nature strip will be permitted by Council?**

You can view or obtain a copy of the Street Trees Preferred Species List from the City's website which contains a schedule of approved street tree species; alternatively you can contact the Parks Technical Officer on 9273 3500 to discuss species options.

### **Can the City or its contractors prune my street tree without notifying me?**

Yes, the City programmes periodic maintenance activities for street trees and, other than general community notification, does not generally notify individual residents in advance.

### **Can I plant my own tree on the nature strip?**

Only the City is authorised to plant trees on the nature strip, however there may be circumstances where the City will allow residents to plant their own trees. For further information, contact the City's Parks Technical Officer on 9273 3500 to discuss.

### **What are statutory clearances and why do these require street trees be pruned?**

Statutory clearances are required by law and apply to vegetation clearance requirements from certain infrastructure. Western Power requires the City to maintain street trees a specified minimum distance clear of overhead powerlines. Clearances also apply to road carriageways, footpaths and the nature strip in general to allow vehicle and pedestrian access. Street trees are pruned to provide clearance 4.5m above roads to the kerb line and 2.5m above footpaths and the nature strip to allow pedestrian access.

### **What if a street tree is causing damage to property? For example: footpath, crossover or fence.**

The City will assess any instances where a street tree is causing damage to the built environment. Where there is the opportunity to remediate the problem through tree maintenance, the City will generally carry this out in preference to removing the tree. If there is a significant hazard caused by an unsuitable tree, the City may be required to remove the tree and replace it with a more suitable species.

### **Who will repair damage to property caused by a street tree?**

The City will carry out an initial assessment and if warranted will assist you with submitting a claim to the City for assessment.

### **Key Contacts for street tree enquiries, please call 9273 3500:**

- Parks Technical Officer – street tree planting and general horticultural advice
- Parks Coordinator (Arboriculture) – street tree maintenance and removals