Arlington Heights Public Works
Forestry Unit Frequently Asked Questions

PARKWAY TREE REMOVALS

Why does the Forestry Unit remove parkway trees?

Trees are removed for numerous reasons, including natural decline, disease, insects, storm damage, utility problems, and site issues.

Will the Village remove privately owned trees?

No. Private property trees are the responsibility of the homeowner. If you believe a tree on your property needs to be removed, contact a certified arborist to inspect the tree in question.

Will the Village contact me before removing my parkway tree?

When a tree is identified to be removed, a green dot is sprayed on the tree and an informational door hanger is placed on the resident's front door. This is done as a courtesy to notify residents of the status of the parkway tree in front of their property. The door hangers have the contact information of the Forestry Unit. Trees slated for removal are marked in advance in order to allow residents time to call if they have any questions. If there is no response from a resident, it is assumed that removal can proceed as planned. On a few occasions, the Village may have to remove parkway trees for emergency reasons, such as watermain breaks, storm damage, or sewer digs.

Why is there a green dot on my parkway tree?

A green dot is painted on a parkway tree scheduled for removal by Forestry staff. The tree is then added to the Forestry Unit's database.

Can a resident request a parkway tree removal?

Residents may request a parkway tree inspection from the Forestry Unit if they believe there is an issue with their parkway tree. The Forestry Unit will decide if the tree in question requires removal or if another solution is possible. The Village values and preserves its parkway trees and uses removal as a tool only if necessary.

Do I need to be home when the parkway tree is removed?

No. Unless otherwise notified, all work by the Forestry Unit can be completed without the homeowner present.

Will the Village clean up after a tree or stump is removed?

After work is completed, the Forestry Unit will clean up the work site to its best ability. Some sawdust or small debris may be left behind. Sometimes, stump grindings may remain at a site but will be picked up shortly later.

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STUMP REMOVAL & PARKWAY RESTORATION

Will the Village remove the stump once a parkway tree is removed?

Yes. The Forestry Unit will remove stumps at a later date. Locator markings will be sprayed before stump removal in the area to locate underground utilities. The parkway will be restored with topsoil and grass seed when weather permits (spring - fall). It is the homeowner's responsibility to water the restored area.

Will the stump be removed at the same time as the tree is removed?

No. Stumps are removed at a later date after the tree removal. Locator markings will be sprayed in the area in order to locate underground utilities before stump removal occurs.

Will the Village restore the parkway after a parkway tree is removed?

Yes. The parkway will be restored with topsoil and grass seed, when weather permits (spring - fall). It is the homeowner's responsibility to water the restored area.

When is it the Village's responsibility to restore my parkway?

The Forestry Unit will restore a parkway after damage caused by a Village-related activity. These activities include Village water main repair, Village sewer repair, parkway tree/stump removal, Village electrical utility repair, or snowplow damage. All damaged areas will be restored with topsoil and grass seed when weather permits (spring-fall). If homeowners wish to repair their parkways on their own, they may do so at their own expense.

A snowplow accidentally tore up some of my grass. Will the Village repair this issue?

Yes. Any sod debris will be picked up and the parkway will be restored with topsoil and grass seed, when weather permits (spring - fall). It is the homeowner's responsibility to water the restored area.

Will the Village fix the low-lying area in my parkway where water collects?

The Forestry Unit will only repair the issue if the low-lying area was caused by work done by the Village, such as during a water main repair, sewer repair, or parkway tree removal, etc. If the area has depressed due to natural causes, then the homeowner may choose to repair the area at their own expense.

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PARKWAY TREE PLANTING

Will the Village replace the trees that are removed from the parkway?

It is currently the Village's policy to replace parkway trees on a one-for-one basis, as space allows. The replacement tree is planted at no cost to the homeowner. A certified arborist will decide if there is an adequate amount of space available (40 feet) and an acceptable planting site. It is the Village's goal to maintain a diverse parkway tree population by replanting where possible.

How long do I have to wait for a replacement tree?

The Village's current policy allows up to one year for a new tree to be replanted in a suitable planting site. Again unforeseen changes to the tree planting program cannot be predicted. When a tree is removed, the address is put on the bottom of the planting list and will be replaced chronologically. Trees are usually planted in the spring and fall seasons.

What will be the size of the replacement tree?

Replacement trees are usually 2-2 ½ inches in diameter. The Village has chosen to replant this size of tree based on transplanting, survivability, cost, and labor.

Can I choose what type of tree will be replanted?

No. One of the Forestry Unit's certified arborists will decide the type of tree to be replanted. Available species are chosen based on stock availability, viability of species, appropriateness of parkway installation, diversity, and proven success. Although these new species may look different than the species you are used to seeing, they have been chosen to diversify the urban forest.

Can a new tree be planted in the same location as the old one?

In general, a new tree will be planted several feet from the old location to avoid the existing underground root system. It is understood that some parkways, such as in cul-de-sacs, may only have one planting location. When these situations occur, the Village may make special arrangements to ensure that each address within the Village has at least one parkway tree.

Why can't I choose the same tree as all of my neighbors?

Diversity is the key to creating an urban forest. As we learned with Dutch Elm Disease and Emerald Ash Borer, planting a single species in mass numbers is a poor urban forestry practice that can have devastating effects.

Can I plant my own parkway tree?

No. The Village's planting program is in place to provide appropriate replacement trees to homeowners. Forestry Unit staff make the educated decision as to the type and quantity of tree that will be planted in the parkway. It is important that the appropriate tree is selected for each and every site in the Village's parkways. Forestry staff will work with homeowners as much as possible. Staff will know the difference between a tree planted by the Village and one planted by a homeowner.

Can I pay to upgrade or select my own tree?

No. The Village does not offer an *upgrade* program for larger trees or specific species of trees. Parkway trees are planted by the Village at no cost to residents. Certified arborists in the Forestry Unit select the species of

tree appropriate for each planting site. Replacement trees are no larger than 2 ½ inches in diameter, as stated in the Village Code.

What are Treegator© bags and how do I use them?

Treegator© bags are a practical solution to aid homeowners in watering newly planted parkway trees. A bag is placed around the trunk of the tree and when it is filled with water, it slowly and evenly delivers water to the tree. These watering bags stay on the new trees for one growing season and are then removed by Forestry Unit personnel. Treegator© bags are the property of the Village; do not remove or damage them. This video demonstrates how to properly fill a Treegator© bag http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgOTHrqF4oA.

PARKWAY TREE PRUNING

Does the Village prune the parkway trees?

Yes. The Village has a contractor specifically assigned to routine pruning. All other pruning issues are handled by the Forestry Unit, as time allows.

How frequently does the Village prune the parkway trees?

Currently the parkway trees are on a four to five year pruning cycle. Pruning cycle maps can be found on the Forestry Unit's webpage. Pruning occurs year-round.

How do I know when the Village prunes my parkway tree?

The Forestry Unit does not send pruning notifications to homeowners. Residents can either call the Forestry Unit or look for pruning cuts to see if their parkway tree was recently trimmed.

Can I request specific trees or parts of the parkway tree to be trimmed?

The Forestry Unit follows a routine pruning cycle so that the general health of the tree is maintained. If there are issues between pruning cycles, residents may contact the Forestry Unit for targeted pruning. Targeted pruning issues include broken and hanging branches, low hanging branches, private tree conflicts, storm damage, overhead utility conflicts, and dead branches.

Can I request to have my neighbor's parkway tree pruned?

The Forestry Unit will honor these requests only if pruning is necessary or if a hazard is present. Requests regarding aesthetic issues or neighbor conflicts will not be honored.

What if I see bushes or trees that obstruct the view of traffic signs?

Contact the Public Works Department at 847-368-5800 to determine whose responsibility it is. Normally, private bushes that overhang sidewalks or create visibility problems are handled by the Engineering Division.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Can trees break sewer lines?

Many people believe that tree roots can damage sewer lines. However, tree roots will only invade sewer lines that have already cracked because of aging or drying joints from settling in the ground. When a sewer line breaks or leaks, a tree will thrive in the newly found water and nutrients. Removing the tree will not solve the issue.

Does the Village supply free woodchips or firewood to residents?

No. However, residents can pick up free woodchips from Commonwealth Edison on the west side of Arlington Heights Road, just north of Rand Road.

Who maintains trees and landscaping in my rear or side yard easement?

Easements are actually the property of the homeowner and therefore landscape and other non-utility maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner. If a utility needs maintenance, contact the appropriate utility or Public Works for assistance in determining who is responsible.

What do I do if a tree or limb is blocking a street or sidewalk?

If a public or private tree or branch from a tree falls onto a public street and is impeding traffic, it should be reported to the Public Works Department at 847-368-5800 or the Arlington Heights Police Department by calling the non-emergency number 847-368-5300.