

Langford's Tree Protection Bylaw (Bylaw No. 2206)

FAQs - What You Need to Know.

The City of Langford controls the cutting of trees through Tree Protection Bylaw No. 2206, as well as through the Development Permit and/or rezoning process.

Prior to removing any tree or vegetation, property owners are strongly encouraged to contact the Planning Department to determine whether any portion of their property has been designated as a Development Permit Area, and how the general Tree Protection Bylaw may apply.

Langford's Tree Protection Bylaw applies to all areas of the City, with exception of the following:

- a. Cutting or Removal of a Protected Tree pursuant to the *Railway Safety Act*, S.B.C. 2004, c. 8, the *Hydro and Power Authority Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 212, the *Oil and Gas Activities Act*, S.B.C. 2008 c. 36, the *Workers Compensation Act*, R.S.B.C. 2019, c. 1, or any regulation under these acts or under Section 50 of the *Community Charter*, S.B.C. 2003, c.26;
- b. Cutting or Removal of a Protected Tree by City employees, or their agents, during the discharge of their duties;
- c. Cutting or Removal of a Protected Tree by British Columbia land surveyors during the discharge of their duties;
- d. Cutting or Removal of a Protected Tree that is undertaken by a Public Utility, on land owned or held by the Public Utility, and done for the purpose of safety, maintenance, or operations of the Public Utility's infrastructure;
- e. Cutting or Removal of a Protected Tree in accordance with a Development Permit issued by the City; and
- f. Cutting or Removal of a Protected Tree species that is a regulated invasive plant or an unregulated invasive plant of concern in British Columbia as declared by the Province or the Invasive Species Council of BC.

Q. I'm not in a Development Permit Area. How do I get a permit to cut down a tree on my property?

- A. Please contact the Parks Department at parks@langford.ca to enquire about the information required for your specific project application or to determine if any of the above exceptions apply.

Q. Does the tree protection bylaw only apply to certain species of trees?

B. No. The bylaw applies to any tree that is:

- At least 20 cm (7.8 inches) in diameter measured 1.4 m (55 inches) above the base; or
- Protected by a restrictive covenant; or
- Contains evidence or use by raptors as defined in the *Wildlife Act*, an osprey, or a heron colony.

Q. What if the tree is leaning over my house?

A. A tree cutting permit may be issued if the tree is at imminent risk of failure.

Q. My tree is about to fall on my house. What do I do?

A. A person may cut or remove a protected tree without a permit if it is in imminent danger of falling or causing injury to a person or property, provided that a tree cutting permit is applied for on the next business day.

Q. Am I allowed to prune my trees without a permit?

A. No. A permit is required for any pruning, cutting or maintenance of a Protected Tree.

Q. I have a Development Permit. Do I need a Tree Permit also?

A. No. Trees authorized to be removed by a Development Permit are exempt from the tree cutting bylaw.

Q. What are the penalties for the unauthorized removal of trees?

A. Each tree which is cut contrary to the Bylaw is considered to be a separate offence. Violations can result in a ticket issuance of up to \$1,000 by Bylaw Enforcement Officers, or Council may seek financial compensation through the courts of up to \$10,000 per violation (or per tree).

Q. What authority does the City of Langford have to control tree removal and cutting on private property?

A. The *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*, along with the Tree Protection Bylaw, enable the City to regulate tree cutting and removal on private property.

Q. How much will it cost me to remove a hazard tree on my property?

A. You will need to contact a certified arborist to receive a quote. The quote will include the cost of a written report prepared by the arborist stating the tree is a hazard and the risk cannot be mitigated other than by cutting or removing the tree (or is dead), as well as the cost of removal.

Q. A tree that's on City property (e.g. boulevard tree) looks diseased/dangerous/dying – who should I call?

- A. Please contact the Parks Department directly to report diseased/dangerous/dying trees on public property, either by email: parks@langford.ca or phone 250-478-7882.

Q. A tree on my property is interfering with power lines/utility works — who should I call?

- A. It's the responsibility of property owners to maintain the trees and vegetation around the service wire (the line that carries electricity from the pole to your home). Please contact BC Hydro for questions.

Q. I'm concerned about trees that are being removed nearby — who can I call to confirm the property owners have a permit?

- A. Please email planning@langford.ca for questions or concerns related to tree cutting on private property. The Tree Protection Bylaw provides City staff with full authority to enter onto lands to inspect and investigate reports of unauthorized tree cutting.