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Department of Public Works  
Bureau of Urban Forestry  
2323 Cesar Chavez Street  
San Francisco, CA 94124

## TREE REMOVAL PERMITTING PROCESS

Street trees are important assets of neighborhoods and commercial districts. The citizens of San Francisco value street trees and have mandated their protection. Significant trees are trees that are within 10' of the public right-of-way and also meet one of the following size requirements: 20' or greater in height, 15' or greater canopy width, 12" or greater diameter of trunk measured at 4.5' above grade. Therefore, a **permit is required before any street tree or significant tree – alive, dead or hazardous – can be removed.** Tree removal without a permit is a violation of Article 16 of the Public Works code and penalties may apply.

### The following is required to process your application

1. Return the completed and signed application form including number and name of the replacement tree species. **Retain this sheet for your reference.**
2. non-refundable fee: for 1-3 trees \$267, for 4-9 trees \$360 and for 10 or more trees \$565 (**make check payable to: CCSF-DPW-BUF and mail to: City and County of San Francisco, PO Box 7461, San Francisco, CA 94120-7461**)

### Other documents that may be required

1. Include proof of damage caused by trees such as paid invoices for repair. Although a tree has caused sidewalk, sewer or other property damage, removal may not be required.
2. If the removal is related to new construction, include site plans accurately showing tree locations as well as your building permit number.

### Removal Process

1. A Department of Public of Works inspector will evaluate the trees for removal.
2. If the Department recommends the tree be removed, it will be posted for period up to 30 days. If objections to the removal are received, the removal will be scheduled for public hearing.
3. If the Department denies the removal, the applicant can request the case be scheduled for a public hearing.
4. After the hearing, a hearing officer will make a recommendation to the DPW Director, who in turn will issue a final decision. The Director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Appeals.

### Further recommendations

1. Have an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist evaluate the tree and provide a written report. Certified Arborists can be found in the Yellow Pages under the heading "Tree Services" or the ISA website at <http://www.isa-arbor.com>
2. Use a licensed and insured certified arborist for any tree work.

*For each tree removed, a replacement tree planting is required. For more information, please call the Bureau of Urban Forestry at 554-6700 or visit our site at <http://www.sfdpw.org>*

*"IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN SAN FRANCISCO" We are dedicated individuals committed to teamwork, customer service and continuous improvement in partnership with the community.*

**KEEP THESE INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR REFERENCE**

**SUMMARY OF DPW ORDER # 169,946 PLANTING GUIDELINES**

It is recommended that the Permittee carry adequate liability insurance for his/her own protection and in order to carry the foregoing provisions into effect.

**General Requirements**

1. Trees to be planted must be from a minimum 15-gallon sized nursery container.
2. Depending on the sidewalk width, the maximum new basin size is 4 feet by 4 feet; the minimum is 2 ½ feet by 3 feet.
3. In no case shall the new street tree result in an obstructed sidewalk width of less than 48 inches.
4. Raised structures around the tree basin can present a tripping hazard and are not allowed.
5. A basin cover, perimeter of red brick, or other approved material is encouraged in the tree basin in the following cases:
  - a) The sidewalk is less than 7 feet wide
  - b) Bus Zones when a planting is allowed
  - c) Areas with heavy pedestrian traffic
  - d) Sidewalks with a grade of 10% or greater
  - e) Tree basins adjacent to parking meters

**Minimum Restrictions**

Trees **may not** be planted within:

1. 25 feet in front of a **traffic sign**
2. 25 feet of the property line on the **approach to an intersection** and 10 feet of the property line on the **exit from an intersection** as the traffic flows IF a corner property
3. 9, 15 and 21 feet of a **street light** for small, medium and large mature size trees respectively
4. 6 feet of a **utility pole**
5. 3 feet of a **parking sign** unless the Department of Parking and Traffic agree to relocate the sign
6. 3 feet of a **gas line, water line, electrical conduit and sidewalk furniture**
7. 5 feet of a **sewer line**
8. 5 feet of a **fire hydrant**
9. 10 feet from a **fire escape**
10. a **bus zone** when the sidewalk is less than or equal to 15 feet
11. a restricted parking Blue Zone
12. 12 to 15 feet of **existing trees** if both are small mature sized trees

Trees **must** be planted between 3 feet and 5 feet of a parking meter.

The property owner shall check for the presence of underground utilities in the area of proposed plantings and shall be solely responsible in avoiding interference with or damage to electric or telephone conduits, sewers and other utilities. Check for the location of your underground gas and utility services by calling Underground Service Alert (USA) at 800-227-2600.

**KEEP THESE INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR REFERENCE**

**Revised 02.13.08**

# TREE REMOVAL PERMIT APPLICATION

**NON REFUNDABLE PROCESSING FEE OF \$267.00 FOR 1-3 TREES, \$360.00 FOR 4-9 TREES OR \$565 FOR 10 OR MORE TREES, IS DUE UPON RECEIPT OF THIS APPLICATION**

**Please make checks payable to: CCSF - DPW - BUF**

**Mail To: City and County of San Francisco, P.O. Box 7461, San Francisco, CA 94120-7461**

**TEL. NO.(415) 641-2676 FAX NO. (415) 695-2147**

<b>For Bureau use only</b> Approved by _____ Date _____ PERMIT # _____
Number to remove _____ Number to plant _____ Species _____

Send completed application to address shown above, **incomplete application will be returned.**

Application is hereby made under provision of Article 16 of the Public Works Code for permission to plant, maintain or remove street trees in or on the sidewalk adjacent to the premises located at:

## 1. TREE(S) TO BE REMOVED

Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Tree(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_  
Significant Tree(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. TREE LOCATION

Street # and Name \_\_\_\_\_ (St., Ave., Blvd., Ct., etc.) (Apt. #) \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Cross Street \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. REASON FOR REMOVAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
 Check here if construction related. **Site plans or diagrams are required.**  
Building permit number if applicable \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. REPLACEMENT TREE(S)

The Public Works Code "requires that another street tree or significant tree be planted in place of the removed tree".

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Species: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check here if Friends of the Urban Forest Planting

## 5. OWNER INFO

Mr.  Ms.  
Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street # and Name \_\_\_\_\_ (St., Ave., Blvd., Ct., etc.) (Apt. #) \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. CONTACT PERSON

Check here if same as above  
Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Company/Agency/Org. \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to hold harmless the City and County of San Francisco, its agents, officers and employees from any damage or injury caused by reason of planting, placement, maintenance, or removal of the planter or plants. The owner or owners of the respective property shall be solely liable for any damages.

**Signature: Property owner or agent, circle one**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_