



VILLAGE OF RHINEBECK  
76 EAST MARKET STREET  
RHINEBECK, NEW YORK 12572-1697

845-876-7015

845-876-5583 FAX

**TREE REMOVAL / PRUNING PERMIT APPLICATION**

According to the Rhinebeck Village Tree Preservation Law, it is necessary to obtain permission to remove or prune any roadside or street tree or any tree growing in a right-of-way in the Village of Rhinebeck. Please fill out this form, and return it to the Village Clerk. It will then be reviewed by members of the Tree Commission. The Tree Commission will make a recommendation to the Village Board, who will act on your request for a permit. Please allow time to complete this process—up to 2 months in total. If granted, your permit will be good for up to one year from the date of approval. The cost of the tree removal /pruning will be the responsibility of the property owner.

1. Name of applicant: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Address of site with tree: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name and contact information of property owner, if different than above:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Mark the tree(s) in question with a ribbon or in another way, commission members must know which tree(s) is/are in question when they come to look. Give the number and diameter of trees being pruned or removed: (Measure the tree at 4.5 feet from the ground. Diameter is figured by dividing the distance around the tree by 3.14)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Pruning? Y/N Removing? Y/N Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Individual or company doing the removal (include phone number):  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Have you informed neighboring property owners of your plans? YES NO
8. On the back of this permit, or on a separate piece of paper, include a *simple* sketch of the property: show the tree(s) in question, any structures (house, garage, etc.) as well as driveways and fences. Include distance to tree from center of nearest roadway: \_\_\_\_\_

The information given above is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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For Official Use Only: Tree Commission Approval: Yes/ No Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Village Board Approval: Yes/No Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Services to be Performed By:

- Professional Paid by Property Owner
- Village Highway Department
- Professional Hired by Village
- Central Hudson

Service Completed:

Date:

Cost:

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## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **About The Rhinebeck Village Tree Preservation Law**

#### **Do I need a permit to remove or prune a tree on my property?**

You need a permit only if the tree in question is in the right-of-way or village easement. For the purposes of this process, 'easement' refers to areas on private property over which the Village has jurisdiction. The most common easement within the Village concerns 'street trees.' Street trees are often planted between a sidewalk and the street. If the tree is on the street side of the sidewalk or next to the street, you will need a permit. If there is no sidewalk, the easement is a distance measured from the center of the road to some point on the private property. This measurement varies within the Village; you may need to consult your deed or county property records to see if your tree is within the easement, and therefore needs a permit.

In *emergency situations* endangering the health, safety and welfare of individuals or property, no permit is required to have the work done, however the person doing the work must file an explanation of the emergency and the work done with the Village Board within 5 business days of the action.

#### **How does the permit process work?**

You obtain a permit application from the Village Clerk, and when it is completed, return it to the Clerk. There is no fee for the permit, but there is a fine for non-compliance if you remove or prune a tree within the easement without authorization. The Tree Commission will review your application, and make its recommendation to the Village Board, which makes the final decision. Because several parties are involved in the decision process, it may take 2 months or more for your permit to be issued. Please be patient. The more thorough and

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accurate the information you provide, the more quickly your application can be processed. Once issued, the permit will be good for 1 year.

## **How is the decision made?**

A member of the Tree Commission will visit your property and inspect the tree in question. Considerations include: does the tree endanger health, safety, or the property of the public, the property owner or an adjacent property owner? Is the tree out of compliance with state, county or local standards for sight lines, driveways or intersections? Does the current location of the tree prevent the property owner from undertaking an otherwise approved construction project or other alteration of the property? Would removal or alteration of the tree be consistent with good horticultural practice and not have an adverse effect on the ecological system?

## **What is the Tree Commission?**

The Tree Commission is a volunteer group, appointed by the Village Board, working to protect and maintain street trees and trees on public land in the Village of Rhinebeck. Established in 2010, the Village Tree Commission also supports tree planting and tree diversity, in recognition of the role trees play in protecting natural resources such as soil, wetlands, water and air quality, as well as preserving the natural beauty and community character of the Village.

## **When is the best time to prune a tree?**

A light pruning may be done at any time. A major pruning is best done in the late winter or very early spring before new growth begins and while the ground is still frozen. Always use sharp pruners, work slowly and stop frequently to check your work. You can't undo your cuts. You should remove suckers (stick-like growth from the trunk), crossing, damaged, crowded and weak branches. You want to encourage an open crown, and strong limb connections.

**Never** top a tree by shearing off the top branches like a haircut—it encourages bushy growth which is not attractive or good for the tree.

## **How about replacing a tree?**

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Please request a tree from the Village, but whether or not we can provide it depends on how many requests we've already received and the number of trees we budgeted for as well as your site conditions. It also depends on the time of year, since our planting is done in spring and fall. It would help if you are willing to wait until the following season or two.

If you wish to buy your own tree, please consult with us so we can help you to choose a tree appropriate to your site, as well as work to improve the diversity of species in the Village. Picking the right tree is a big job which can have life-time consequences; please let us help!

Thank you for helping us make and keep Rhinebeck's trees beautiful. For further information, contact the Village Board liaison to the Commission through the Village Clerk, 876-7015.