



**TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN
Department of Public Services**

**TREE REMOVAL, PRUNING &
REPLACEMENT POLICY
(Rev 2. ; 12-11-2019)**

The following protocol shall be used for removing, pruning and replacing protected Town tree(s):

I. Tree Alteration Applications for Town Tree Removal or Pruning

1. A tree alteration permit application is required for any Town tree removal or tree pruning. Said tree alteration permit(s) shall be filed with the Department of Public Services and accompanied with any associated tree alteration application fee, if applicable.
2. Upon receipt of the tree alteration application, the Town's Engineering and/ or Highway Division staff will make a determination if the subject tree is located on Town property and/ or right-of-way (ROW), or located on private property
3. Said tree alteration application will be forwarded to the Tree Warden for review if said tree is located on Town property.

II. Tree Alteration Applications for Dead, Diseased or Dying Town Trees

1. In the event the Tree Warden determines the subject tree is dead, diseased or dying, it shall be the Town's responsibility and expense to remedy the subject tree by either its removal or by selective pruning as the Tree Warden sees fit.
2. In the event the Tree Warden determines the subject tree's condition is an imminent threat to the public, the Tree Warden shall either remove or prune the subject tree in a timely manner.
3. In the event the Tree Warden determines the subject tree's condition is not an imminent threat to the public, the Public Services Department shall incorporate the subject tree into a tree removal list, which shall be competitively bid in accordance with Town purchasing regulations.

III. Tree Alteration Applications for Healthy Town Tree Removal and/ or Pruning

1. Any tree permit applications for healthy Town tree removal or pruning shall be forwarded to the Conservation Commission, serving as the Town Tree Board, to provide an advisory opinion to the Tree Warden on the tree removal or pruning permit application.

2. The applicant for said tree permit applications will be required to provide a compelling case to the Tree Board and Tree Warden on why the tree permit application should be approved.
3. If approved by the Tree Board and the Tree Warden, the applicant will be required to:
 - a. Have the subject tree removed or pruned by a RI Licensed Arborist at the applicant's expense
 - b. If a tree removal, grind the stump no less than 12" below grade and loam and seed the area of disturbance
 - c. Provide reimbursement to the Town in accordance with the Tree Replacement schedule for new tree stock equivalent to the tree removal and/or pruning loss. Said funds shall be used by the Town for replacement tree stock. The Tree Warden shall determine the appropriate tree species and location for any new tree stock, which may or may not be in proximity to the tree that is removed or pruned.

IV. Town Trees That Were Removed and/ or Pruned Without a Tree Permit

Any Town tree(s) that were illegally removed, damaged, or pruned without issuance of a written permit as approved by the Town Tree Warden consistent with Chapter 18.5 - Tree Ordinance - of the Town Code shall be subject to the following:

1. The South Kingstown Public Services Department (DPS) shall solicit written quotes from time to time for new tree plantings in accordance with the standards listed in the Tree Ordinance, Section 18-5.2 (c)(4). Said quotes shall be for different species and size of trees in accordance with the Town Tree Planting Specifications in the Town of South Kingstown, R.I. Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Said quotes shall also include the cost of proper tree care and watering for a two- (2) year warranty period subsequent to the tree planting.
2. Upon determination that a protected tree(s) has been illegally removed, damaged, or pruned, the Town Tree Warden may require a monetary restitution of up to \$2,500 (two thousand five hundred dollars) from any individual or entity who performed or authorized the work. The amount of monetary restitution required shall be based upon the average cost to plant and maintain replacement trees consistent with the written quote(s) the DPS has on file and the number of replacement trees that shall be required to remediate the illegal action. The number of replacement trees required shall be derived from the diameter at breast height (DBH) of the tree(s) approved for removal or the tree(s) illegally removed, damaged, or pruned in accordance with the Tree Replacement Schedule below. DBH is defined as the diameter of the trunk of a tree measured at 4.5' from ground level. The amount of monetary restitution required for an illegal action against any individual tree shall not exceed \$2,500 (two thousand five hundred dollars) as set forth in Sec. 18.5-36 (a) of the Town Code.

Tree Replacement Schedule:

DBH of Removed Damaged or Pruned Town Tree	Tree Replacement Quantity
2.1-10.0"	1
10.1-20.0"	2
20.1-30.0"	3
> 30.0"	4

3. All restitution funds collected by the Town for replacement trees shall be deposited in a dedicated reserve account for future municipal tree plantings.
4. The location and species for replacement tree plantings shall be determined by the Tree Warden in accordance with the Town Tree Planting Specifications in the Town of South Kingstown, R.I. Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. The Tree Warden may seek an Advisory Opinion from the Tree Board for decisions regarding compensation, location, and species of replacement tree plantings. The location of replacement tree(s) may be anywhere in Town as the Tree Warden sees fit and not necessarily in proximity to the tree(s) that were removed with prior approval or removed/ pruned illegally.
5. Once sufficient funding is reserved, the DPS will solicit competitive bids from licensed arborists to install replacement tree plantings.