



# Protecting Trees in Sechelt

The District of Sechelt has adopted an environmental management bylaw (Bylaw 484) to help reduce the loss of tree cover from new development sites. This brochure provides a quick guide to the bylaw and permit requirements. Please refer to the full bylaw for details.

## Do I Need A Permit?

You will need a permit if you are planning to cut, prune, top or remove Protected Trees. The bylaw applies to:

- Properties that are 1.0 hectare (2.47 acres) or larger in size, and
- All properties in an environmental or natural hazard Development Permit Area (DPA) as defined in the OCP, regardless of property size. Development Permit areas include:
  - stream buffer area (15m-30m)
  - steeply sloped property (over 30%)
  - shoreline properties (first 15m from the high water mark).

Staff will advise you whether a Tree Permit or a Development Permit is needed, depending on the work proposed.

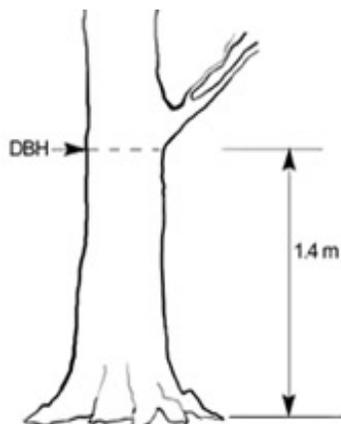
## Exemptions

You don't need a tree-cutting permit:

- For existing residential properties less than 1 ha. in size (except if you are in a Development Permit Area described above).
- For ALR land or land in forestry tenure.
- For emergency removal of hazard trees.

## What is a "Protected Tree"?

A Protected Tree is defined in the bylaw to include Arbutus trees, and any other trees larger than 60cm (24") diameter at breast height (measured 1.4m from ground level). Protected Trees also includes wildlife trees or trees protected as part of an approved subdivision or development plan.



## Can I Still Build on My Property?

Yes. The bylaw allows removal of trees necessary for utilities, driveway, the building footprint etc. under an approved permit. The goal is to protect as many healthy trees as possible, particularly groups of trees. However, if trees need to be removed to accommodate building on the property, replacement trees must be planted.



*Preserving clusters of healthy trees is often preferred over retaining single trees.*



## Design Around the Trees

If you are planning to build or develop, the natural features of the site, including the trees, should be used as the basis for the subdivision or development layout. Building footprints and service lines should be planned around retained trees.



## What Information Is Needed?

A qualified Arborist must prepare an inventory of the trees on the property and submit an assessment report and tree retention plan to the District as part of the permit application. The report will identify the healthy trees to be retained and any trees proposed to be removed. The tree retention plan must also identify how existing trees will be protected during site development (with protective fencing or other means). And, the size and location of any replacement trees will also be shown on this plan.

## Pruning Trees

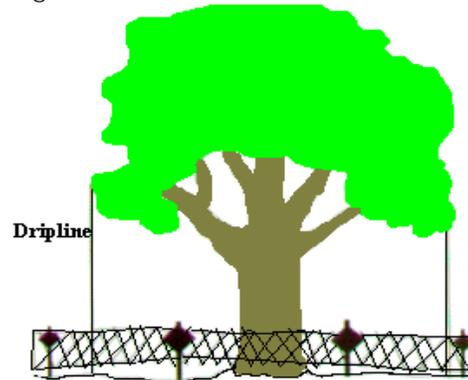
Pruning can cause significant damage and affect the overall health of the tree. Topping of trees in particular causes stress and disfigurement of trees and can lead to decay and increased hazard. Minor pruning of Protected Trees is permitted without a permit (branches less than 10cm diameter).



Otherwise, pruning of Protected Trees requires a permit to ensure good management practices are followed, and the health of the trees is maintained.

## Protecting Trees During Construction

Protecting trees during site construction is required under the bylaw. Owners (or their contractors) must protect the root zone of the Protected Trees, and ensure that no equipment, soil or fill or other activity damages the trees.



*Protective fencing must be placed around the root zone during construction (extending beyond the dripline of the tree)*

## Bylaw Penalties

If trees are cut, removed or damaged without a permit from the District of Sechelt, fines may apply for each tree affected. Additional replanting requirements may also apply if trees are removed without permits.



**For More Information: Contact the  
District of Sechelt at (604) 885-1986**

[www.sechelt.ca](http://www.sechelt.ca)