



Frequently Asked Questions

Tree Trimming

City of Pompano Beach Urban Forestry Division

Q. Do I need a Tree Permit Application to trim trees?

A. No. The City of Pompano Beach does not require a permit for tree trimming. Tree trimming must be done in accordance with arborist standards.

Q. Can I trim my own trees on my own property?

Tree trimming must be performed by an ISA Certified Arborist or a Broward County Licensed Tree Trimmer. There is one exception where single family homeowners are allowed to trim trees on their own property as long as the trimming is done in accordance with arborist standards.

Q. What is an ISA Certified Arborist?

A. An ISA Certified Arborist credential identifies professional arborists who have a minimum of three years' full-time experience working in the professional tree care industry and who have passed an extensive examination covering all facets of arboriculture.

Q. What is a Broward County Licensed Tree Trimmer?

A. The Broward County Board of County Commissioners have adopted an ordinance for regulating the tree trimming industry as a result of concerns about the quality of tree trimming practiced in Broward County, and to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public. This ordinance intends to reduce the frequency of poor pruning practices.

All businesses or governmental agencies that advertise, offer or perform tree trimming in Broward County are required to obtain a Tree Trimmer License.

Two different classes of licenses will be issued, depending upon the level of professional training an organization's staff has achieved: Class A Tree Trimmer License (ISA Certified Arborist) and Class B Tree Trimmer License (completion of Broward County Training Course and Exam).

Q. What right do I have to trim my neighbor's tree that grows into my property?

A. The adjoining property owner has the right to cut those parts of the tree which encroach upon the adjoining property. It is legally recognized that a property owner owns both the ground below and the air above. A property owner is entitled to trim both limbs and roots which intrude onto their property from the neighbor's tree.

It is also recognized that the trimming must be done correctly and shall not result in tree abuse.

Q. If I have more than the minimum amount of trees on my single family property and I want to remove one, do I still have to replace the tree?

A. A tree permit for removal may be issued when the required application data is supplied and the tree is in excess of the tree requirements for the single family property.

This replacement may be done by the single family homeowner providing an equivalent value payment into the Tree Canopy Trust Fund if the Director of Development Services determines that the replacement cannot be planted on site.

All trees are protected and will be to be replaced. All existing trees, whether required or not, add valuable tree canopy coverage to the overall tree canopy for the city. Every tree counts!

Q. What is the correct way to trim trees?

A. The correct way to trim trees is in accordance with arborist standards. The Tree Care Industry Association (formerly the National Arborist Association) preaches to its members the importance of voluntarily adhering to standards as a way for them to distinguish themselves from other less qualified contractors. The standards derive from American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Tree care ANSI standards fall into two categories. The ANSI A300 standard states accepted practices for pruning, cabling/bracing and fertilization. The ANSI Z133 pertains to safe work practices. The Web will be your best research tool here.

Q. How do I trim palms?

A. Avoid trimming palms whenever possible. As palms recycle nutrients from the browning fronds to the heart of the palm, frond removal at that time deprives the palm of needed nutrients and weakens its defenses. Most palms shed their fronds naturally, but others will drop the fronds after some time.

When it is necessary to prune the palms, never remove fronds which initiate above the horizontal plane (think 3:00 – 9:00 and do not trim fronds in between). Carefully removing green fruit and seeds with a pruning saw does not hurt the palm, and the blooming stalk can be removed as soon as it appears. This will help keep the ground clear.

Do not use nails or screws to attach lights or signs to the trunk. Do not use climbing spikes to climb palms. Do not pull or rip off fronds. These types of puncture wounds are permanent – they do not heal on palms.

The “hurricane” or “candle” cut trimming of palms is considered tree abuse. This type of trimming must never be practiced.

Q. What is tree abuse?

A. Tree abuse is defined and includes any or all of the following: hatracking a tree; destroying/effectively destroy; pruning which leaves stubs or results in a flush cut; splitting of limb ends; removing tree bark; using climbing spikes, nails, hooks; pruning that does not conform to standards set forth by the American National Standards institute, pruning live palm frond which initiate above the horizontal plane, overlifting a tree, shaping a tree.

Tree abuse is prohibited in the city.

Abused trees may not be counted toward fulfilling landscape requirements and may be required to be replaced if corrective action is not adequate to remediate the abuse.

Q. How do I trim Mangrove’s?

A. Due to their ecological importance, mangroves have long enjoyed protection through State of Florida regulations concerning removal and trimming. In an effort to simplify the process, the Legislature passed legislation in 1995, amended in 1996, titled the Mangrove Protection Rule, Section 403.9321 through 403.9333 Florida Statutes. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection coordinates the implementation of the Rule in conjunction with local governments that are designated to act as the state’s local representatives.

Mangrove trimming requires a certified mangrove trimmer to prune and perform or supervise the altering and pruning of mangrove plants, as well as a license for the actual trimming to take place.

Contact Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department, Biological Resources Division for permitting and further information.