

Original March 26, 1990
Revised October 11, 2011

Tree Removal Policy

Trees and shrubs serve a variety of functions on the campuses of Clackamas Community College. While retaining the desired character, environmental stewardship, and the beauty of the natural and designed landscape areas, it is still sometimes necessary to remove large trees and shrubs for a variety of reasons. Trees and large shrubs will require consideration for removal, when the individual plant has experienced one or more of the following:

Factors that will be used in order to determine if a tree is to be removed may include one or more of the following:

1. the tree will be evaluated by Grounds Team Leader as to whether or not that plant is a safety hazard to the public, see **Safety Hazard Plant** (defined). If it has been determined that the plant meets one or more of the criteria, A through F listed below, the information concerning removal of the plant will be presented to the Grounds Committee.
2. the location of the tree may determine the need for removal of that plant, especially when interfering with campus functions, as some areas may justify individual plant considerations.
3. for plants over 15 feet, the value, location and size of the plant will be considered, by the Grounds Committee, when making a plant removal determination.

Safety Hazard Plant (defined): Trees considered safety hazards may include plants that exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- * dead or dying
- * serious rot or canker problems
- * crotch cracks or other structural defects
- * severe environmental or physical changes (i.e. storm damage, construction changes)

When assessing a tree for its hazard risk, consider:

- A. The species** - evaluate trees for such things as narrow crotch angles (noting that the level of hazard is relative to the size of the plant), wood strength or weakness, existing health and vigor of the plant.
- B. The position (of the tree)** - trees leaning over walkways, buildings, sitting areas, parking areas and pedestrian high traffic areas may be high risk, trees blocking normal vehicular or pedestrian vision as to impair safety (the tree location will be considered).
- C. The tree structure (architecture)** - how the tree framework looks must be assessed (this must be applied to individual species). The tree must be evaluated for health and vigor status, given the growing environment of the individual tree and the naturally occurring variation in trees.

- D. Recent changes to the tree and its surroundings** - depending on tree species, root rot or root injuries due to construction can cause problems during years following the injury. The crown of the tree may look better than ever because it is getting water and fertilizers because of a new lawn. The woody support roots may rot while the non-woody absorbing roots flourish. The top gets heavier, and the bottom roots get weaker. The tree uproots in a gentle storm. Due to physical or mechanical damages the tree may become weakened to the point of becoming a safety hazard.
- E. External signs of internal defects** - rot and fruiting bodies are signs of internal problems, but fruit bodies are not always present. The most important external sign is the crack. Vertical cracks, especially when they are on opposite sides of the tree. The following should be evaluated for hazard determination: the base between roots should be examined, as well as old branch openings, the area below codominant stems that have included bark should be examined, the area below where old hardware has been used for bracing should be examined, cracks where branches bend downward should be carefully examined.
- F. Internal defects** - when the above (sections A-E) cannot supply enough information in order to make a final determination, the assistance of an outside firm with the proper tools and skills to determine internal tree defects may be consulted.

Under special circumstances, such as during a storm of great magnitude or if due to a vehicle accident, a tree becomes a safety hazard, the Grounds Team Leader will either determine immediate tree removal or if such a situation occurs on a different section of campus, the grounds committee member representing that campus area will immediately contact Campus Safety and Campus Services who will reserve the right to determine immediate plant removal needs.

Approved by the Grounds Committee on November 8, 2011

Grounds Committee represented by:

Plant Services Department: Kirk Pearson, Tom Powell and Aaron Ingersoll
 Horticulture Department: Elizabeth Howley, Loretta Mills, and TJ McDonough
 Life Sciences Department: Jennifer Bown and Joan Harrison-Buckley
 Athletic Department: Keoni Mchone
 Environmental Learning Center: Alison Heimowitz
 Associated Student Government: Student representatives