
TREE MANAGEMENT ON METRO VANCOUVER LANDS

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Approved By: MVRD/MVHC/GVWD/GVS&DD Boards

Policy No. GV-017

PURPOSE

To provide direction on the inspection and management of trees wholly or in part on Metro Vancouver lands.

DEFINITIONS

“Hazard Tree” means a Tree, identified in writing by a Qualified Tree Risk Assessor, to be in such a condition that there is a substantial likelihood that all or part of the Tree will fail within the schedule of assessment, resulting in the risk of personal injury or property damage;

“Metro Vancouver” means, collectively, the Metro Vancouver Regional District, the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District, the Greater Vancouver Water District and the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation;

“Metro Vancouver Lands” means fee-simple and leasehold properties held by one or more of the entities comprising Metro Vancouver, but does not include lands covered by statutory rights of way, licence agreements, permits or other land tenure or access agreements, unless responsibility for Tree management is specifically assigned to Metro Vancouver in the relevant instrument;

“Qualified Tree Risk Assessor” refers to a Metro Vancouver staff person or external party who is qualified and certified under a WorkSafeBC approved program to conduct a Tree risk assessment and make recommendations for abatement of risks where a Tree is assessed as a Hazard Tree; and

“Tree” means a woody perennial plant usually having a single trunk or stem which has a diameter of at least 10 centimetres when measured from a height of 1.4 metres above the natural grade of the land and with an overall height of at least 4.5 metres.

POLICY

Metro Vancouver has extensive landholdings in urban settings with frequent interface between inhabitants, assets, and Trees; in forested areas such as regional parks and conservation areas where the public is invited to recreate; and, in wilderness settings with rare interfaces between the public or Metro Vancouver staff, assets and Trees. In managing the risks associated with its Trees, Metro Vancouver prioritizes public and employee safety, environmental protection, property and critical infrastructure and prudent financial management of the organization. Trees will be inspected and maintained in accordance with this Policy, and any procedures in effect from time to time, in a manner that reflects the priority and urgency necessary to manage the risks, in accordance with the annual budget.

This Policy guides the inspection and management of Trees on Metro Vancouver Lands by ensuring that processes are aligned and standardized for risk assessment across all Metro Vancouver departments.

1. Inspection and Management of Metro Vancouver Trees:

- a) Where Metro Vancouver Lands contain Trees for which a failure could result in one or more of:
 - i. personal injury while using sites that are authorized for use by Metro Vancouver staff, contractors, and the public;
 - ii. damage to Metro Vancouver or adjacent property owner assets; or
 - iii. interruption in the provision of Metro Vancouver services to the public,Metro Vancouver will inspect and maintain Trees on Metro Vancouver Lands in accordance with its corporate procedures.
- b) Where Metro Vancouver Lands contain Trees which have not yet been part of a scheduled assessment, Metro Vancouver will assess and manage Trees upon receipt of a notice, whether from Metro Vancouver staff or the public, setting out a concern regarding perceived dangers posed by the Tree and the location of the Tree.

2. Hazard Tree Abatement Actions:

Where a Tree has been assessed as a Hazard Tree, abatement actions will be undertaken in accordance with corporate procedures in order to achieve the following broad objectives:

- i. to reduce/address risk to Metro Vancouver staff and the public;
- ii. to protect Metro Vancouver infrastructure and other assets; and
- iii. to enhance and maintain healthy forested ecosystems in urban settings and wilderness settings.

3. Tree Replacement:

Metro Vancouver will maintain a Tree replacement program to ensure successional replacement by defining the number of appropriate replacement Trees required for every Tree removed in urban settings. While managing for Hazard Trees or when accommodating new development in urban settings, Metro Vancouver will maintain or provide a replacement ratio of a minimum of 2:1 or the standard set by local municipality, whichever is higher.