

Guidelines for Tree Removal

Definitions:

Homeowner Trees – When residents bought their homes in Stonegate, they were given a plot plan that outlines the property lines/borders relative to neighboring or abutting homes and businesses in the neighborhood. Any trees that are within a homeowner's sole-use boundary are considered that homeowner's responsibility to maintain and replace if necessary.

Common Trees - All trees that are not Homeowner Trees are considered Common Trees. This includes the front wall area of Stonegate, the area between the inside circle of homes, and the area down by the fire road and vernal pond, and also the utility beds.

Discretionary Removal - When a homeowner wishes to remove a tree for aesthetic or other non-safety related reasons. Also when a tree is damaged, diseased, or dead, but poses little or no risk to the safety of residents or and/or property.

Hazardous Removal - When a homeowner must remove a damaged, diseased, or dead tree to protect the safety of residents or and/or property from likely damage that could present a significant liability to the Stonegate Association. Also, when a storm or similar emergency has affected multiple homes, and the board determines that it is in the interest of all residents to limit risk and resolve the problem quickly and efficiently through a single contractor (even if only some of the trees pose a significant or immediate risk).

Guidelines:

There are four basic categories of tree removal, and there is a specific set of guidelines for each category:

1. Discretionary Removal of Homeowner Trees

- a. Approval – Residents should send a written request to the board, asking for permission to remove the trees.
- b. Removal - After receiving approval, a homeowner may utilize his/her own preferred contractor unless the board decides that a single, board approved contractor must be used.
- c. Replacement – In some cases, the board may require that removed trees be replaced with new ones of a specific type. This is especially true for shrubs in front of the house and trees that form a visual barrier between houses.
- d. Cost – Always paid by homeowner.

2. Discretionary Removal of Common Trees

- a. Approval – Residents should send a written request to the board, asking the Stonegate Association to remove the trees.
- b. Removal - There have been no instances to date that have ever warranted this type of removal. If approved, only the Stonegate Association's designated contractor may remove common trees.
- c. Replacement – Typically no replacement would be done.
- d. Cost – Always paid by homeowner.

3. Hazardous Removal of Homeowner Trees

- a. Approval –Residents should send a written request to the board, asking for permission to remove the trees.
- b. Removal - After receiving approval, a homeowner may utilize his/her own preferred contractor unless the board decides that a single, board approved contractor must be used.
- c. Replacement – In some cases, the board may require that removed trees be replaced with new ones of a specific type. This is especially true for shrubs in front of the house and trees that form a visual barrier between houses.
- d. Cost – Sometimes paid by Stonegate Association if the board determines that the risk outweighs the cost.

4. Hazardous Removal of Common Trees

- a. Approval – Residents should send a written request to the board, asking the Stonegate Association to remove the trees.
- b. Removal - If approved, only the Stonegate Association's designated contractor may remove common trees.
- c. Replacement – Typically no replacement would be done.
- d. Cost – Always paid by Stonegate Association if the board determines that the risk outweighs the cost.

General Comments:

When in doubt, contact the Stonegate Board of Trustees and someone will come out and assess the situation. If needed, the board will contact a licensed tree arborist for professional advice on some or all of the questions.

The board does a walk around in the spring and summer months, and at that time, tries to assess trees that may have been damaged over the winter or just over time. Preventative maintenance goes a long way towards safety and tree longevity.....

**THESE ARE ONLY GUIDELINES AND ALL REQUESTS ARE AT
THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**