

## OBJECTIVE/GOAL

To protect and preserve Reston's natural wooded areas and maturing landscape, in recognition of their environmental and aesthetic value to the community.


## SPECIAL NOTES



PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION.

### REMOVAL OF ORNAMENTAL TREES

*ORNAMENTAL*  
used for aesthetic purposes in landscaping due to their flowers, texture, form, shape or other characteristics



You must obtain DRB approval to remove any live *ornamental* tree (such as Dogwood, Holly, Cherry, etc.) regardless of size or location, unless it is an invasive exotic species (see Removal of Invasive Species, Stump Treatment and definitions of tree save, natural area and RPA in this guideline).

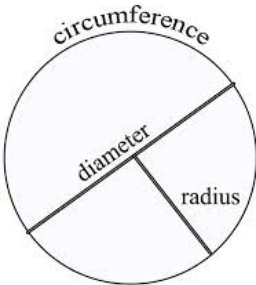
### REMOVAL OF OTHER TREES

*DECIDUOUS*  
having leaves that are shed seasonally



You must obtain DRB approval to remove any live tree, either *deciduous* or evergreen, whose trunk measures 4 inches in diameter (12 1/2 inches in circumference) or more when measured 4.5 feet above the ground, regardless of location, unless it is an invasive exotic species (see Removal of Invasive Species, Stump Treatment and definitions of tree save, natural area and RPA in this guideline).


trunk measures 4" in diameter or 12.5" around at 4.5' above the ground



The vegetated character of natural wooded areas should be preserved. **If removal of non-invasive native smaller trees (under 4" diameter) and/or understory vegetation will change the overall character of the natural wooded area, an application is required.**

### REMOVAL OF INVASIVE SPECIES

*STREETSCAPE*  
the visual elements of a street, including adjoining buildings, vegetation and open spaces, that combine to form the street's visual character



Plants identified as invasive exotics and prohibited per Use and Maintenance Standards Resolution 2 Vegetation, as amended, may be removed from tree save and natural areas without an application if the removal will not impact screening for private property or *streetscape* (see Stump Treatment and definitions of tree save, natural area and RPA in this guideline). A certified arborist's statement confirming the tree species should be obtained and kept for your records.



## STUMP TREATMENT

Tree stumps must be completely removed if visible from a public pathway or street, unless they are located in an established wooded area. Tree stumps must be completely removed or cut flush with the ground if not visible from a public pathway or street, unless they are located in an established wooded area. Tall stumps, also called "snags", and fallen/felled trees may be left in wooded tree save and wooded natural areas for wildlife habitat if they do not create a hazard, however dead trees, limbs, brush piles, leaves and debris should not be dumped, moved or blown into a tree save or natural area.

## DEFINITIONS

### TREE SAVE OR SAVE TREES AREA



An area marked on the property plat filed with Fairfax County, usually shown with scalloped edges. The area is clearly marked "Tree Save" or "Save Trees" and is usually created at the time of the original plat filing. (This is not the same as an area marked as "Limits of Clearing" on the original site plan, which simply indicates areas that were not disturbed by the builder.) No trees should be removed or pruned except invasive exotic species (see Removal of Invasive Species in this guideline), and only invasive undesirable plants, such as poison ivy, should be removed from this area. The ground cover is to be left natural with no mulch or added material such as dumped leaves or brush piles.

### NATURAL AREA



A wooded area, a managed meadow, or an area with a successional state of natural vegetation which may have contiguous tree or shrub canopy. This area may have been left undisturbed by the builder, been allowed to grow and expand naturally, been managed for wildlife habitat, or include vegetation that was intentionally installed. Plants identified as invasive exotics and prohibited per Use and Maintenance Standards Resolution 2 Vegetation, as amended, may be removed without an application if the removal will not impact screening for private property or streetscape (see Stump Treatment in this guideline). A certified arborist's statement confirming the tree species should be obtained and kept for your records. The vegetated character of natural wooded areas should be preserved. **If removal of non-invasive native smaller trees (under 4" diameter) and/or understory vegetation will change the overall character of a natural wooded area, an application is required.**



RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA  
(RPA)/CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The RPA includes corridors of environmentally sensitive land that lie alongside or near the shorelines of streams, lakes, ponds, and other waterways. The RPA map may be found on the Fairfax County web site ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)) to determine if your property is in the RPA. Conservation easements are recorded with the county as part of the title record. Removal of vegetation in an RPA or conservation easement, including removal of dead trees, may be prohibited. Contact Fairfax County for more information.

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## REVIEW PROCESS



IF YOUR PROJECT MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA, **NO APPLICATION IS REQUIRED.**

DEAD TREE

You are removing a **dead** tree that is not shown on a DRB-approved landscaping plan. Trees shown on approved landscaping plans must be replaced or an application must be submitted for permanent elimination. Documentation (photos, certified arborist statement, etc.) should be obtained, kept for your records, and presented to RA staff if requested. (See Stump Treatment and RPA in this guideline)

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REMOVAL OF VEGETATION

You are removing non-tree vegetation or trees of an *invasive species* not shown on a DRB-approved landscaping plan (see Removal of Invasive Species, Stump Treatment and definitions of tree save, natural area and RPA in this guideline). Vegetation shown on a DRB-approved landscaping plan must be replaced or an application must be submitted for permanent elimination.

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PRUNING

You are pruning trees that are not in a tree save area. Trees should not be limbed up higher than 8' above the ground or topped.

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IF YOUR PROJECT MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA, YOU MUST COMPLETE AN **APPLICATION FORM** AND OBTAIN AT LEAST THREE **NEIGHBOR SIGNATURES** (ONE OF WHICH MUST BE AN ADJACENT LOT OWNER). STAFF MAY REVIEW YOUR APPLICATION.

LIVE TREE

You are removing a maximum of three (3) live trees, 4" or greater in diameter at 4.5' above the ground if deciduous or any size if ornamental, and provide the items on the checklist including documentation (photos, certified arborist statement, etc.) substantiating the reason for removal. (See Removal of Invasive Species, Stump Treatment, definitions of tree save, natural area and RPA, and Reasons for Removal in this guideline)

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# LANDSCAPING (TREE REMOVAL)

COMMERCIAL/PUBLIC PROPERTY

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## SHARED LOCATION

If a tree trunk is on a common property line, you must obtain the signature of your neighbor who co-owns the tree. This signature must be on the front of the application as co-applicant.

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**FOR ALL OTHER PROJECTS, YOU MUST COMPLETE AN APPLICATION FORM AND OBTAIN YOUR NEIGHBORS' SIGNATURES. YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE REVIEWED BY STAFF IN CONSULTATION WITH A DRB MEMBER OR BY A PANEL OF THE DRB, WHO WILL APPLY THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES.**

## REFERENCE INFORMATION

Please read Special Notes, Definitions and Application Checklist in this guideline for important reference information.

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## REASONS FOR REMOVAL

The DRB strongly encourages preservation of existing live trees. Reasons for removal might include:

- disease or decline
- non-survivable damage from lightning strikes, frost cracks, etc.
- potential endangerment of people or property
- damage to property
- too large for the space and pruning will not be effective
- detrimental effect on other trees
- blockage of walkways or vehicular sight lines
- size and/or growth habit encroaches on neighboring property
- invasive roots or hazardous litter
- invasive species

The DRB will not support extensive tree removal solely for the purpose of re-grading, establishing a lawn, providing a view, providing sunlight, or creating an open area. Dropping of fruit or leaves is not a valid reason for removal unless the litter creates a hazardous situation.

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## CERTIFICATION

The DRB will require a statement from a certified arborist when photos do not clearly substantiate the reason for removal. This statement must include the arborist's International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certification number and the reason for removal.

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# LANDSCAPING (TREE REMOVAL)

COMMERCIAL/PUBLIC PROPERTY

## REPLACEMENT

The DRB encourages, and may require, an appropriate replacement tree(s) and/or other vegetation be installed and maintained as a stipulation for approval.

## WOODED AREAS

Wooded areas should not be altered in such a way that impacts their natural character, environmental integrity, or screening effect.

You must obtain DRB approval to change the overall character of a natural wooded area (see Special Notes and Definitions in this guideline).

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST



### INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WITH YOUR APPLICATION:

#### DESCRIPTION

A clear description of the tree(s) to be removed, including size and species, and the reason for removal

#### REPLACEMENT PLANTINGS

Information regarding any intended replacement plantings or an explanation of why replacement vegetation is not being proposed (photos and/or a landscape plan of vegetation to remain may be helpful)

#### LOCATION

A site plan or photos showing the location of tree(s) to be removed including proximity to existing structures

#### DOCUMENTATION

Photos and/or certified arborist statement including ISA certification number detailing the health, species, and reason for removal (if multiple trees, it may be helpful to mark the trees with ribbon or paint before photographing them)

**QUESTIONS? CALL COVENANTS ADMINISTRATION: (703) 435-6530**

