

City Permits - Fact Sheet

Significant Tree Permits



What is a significant tree?

Council's Local Law No. 1 (Community Amenity), defines a Significant Tree as, 'a tree or palm on private land:

- with a trunk circumference of 150 centimetres or greater, measured 1 metre above ground level
- with multiple stems where the circumference of its exterior stems is equal to, or greater than 150 centimetres when measured 1 metre above ground level.'

When do you require a Permit?

A permit is required to prune or remove a significant tree or palm.

A significant tree permit is required in addition to any planning permit required by the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

Exemptions

A permit is not required to prune a significant tree to comply with the following requirements:

- Where it overhangs a footpath or other part of the road used by pedestrians to any extent up to a height of 2.1 metres, or
- Where the tree extends over any part of a road in such a way that it:
 - a) obstructs the view between vehicles at an intersection; or
 - b) obstructs the view between vehicles and pedestrians; or
 - c) obstructs any Council assets including drains; or
 - d) obscures a traffic control item from an approaching vehicle or pedestrian; or
 - e) obscures street lighting; or
 - f) constitutes a danger to vehicles or pedestrians or compromising the safe and convenient use of the road.

If a tree is to be pruned under any of these exemptions detailed above, for the avoidance of doubt, you are strongly encouraged to keep photographic evidence of the tree prior to conducting any works that clearly demonstrates one or more of the obstructions detailed above.

The application process

- On receipt of a complete application to the City Permits unit, your application will be reviewed by Council's Arborist.
- Council's Arborist provides their recommendation to the City Permits unit who will notify the applicant of the outcome.
- If a permit is to be granted, the applicant will be advised and requested to pay the permit fees prior to the issuing of the permit.
- If the pruning or removal of a significant tree is refused, the applicant will be advised of the reasons for the decision.

How long will an application take to assess?

Applications take 10 business days to assess provided no further information is required. Works must not commence without a permit.

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Checklist

The applicant is required to submit:

- application fee
- site plan/drawing
- photographs or diagrams showing the proposed extent of pruning or removal.
- arborist report. An objective assessment of the subject tree/s, written by an experienced Arborist.
- building report. If a significant tree is a risk to property a report by a Building Engineer.
- consent of Body Corporate Manager or Committee of Management if applicable

Who should prune your tree?

Ensure that you engage an Arborist who is suitably qualified and experienced, working for a reputable tree company with appropriate insurance.

- Pruning must be done to Australian Standards AS4373-2007 – Pruning of Amenity Trees
- When pruning palm trees, it is essential that the Arborist has an understanding of palms and the threat of Fusarium Wilt and other pests and diseases.

Be wary of unsolicited door knockers suggesting that your tree needs to be removed because it is diseased or dangerous. They are usually unqualified tree loppers who try to intimidate people, particularly the elderly and pensioners into removing healthy trees.

Appeal Process

Officer's decision is final. Further applications may be submitted at any time to reconsider pruning or removal of a significant tree.

It is the applicant's responsibility to submit adequate information such as Arborist, Engineer or other reports for officers to make evidence-based decisions.

Council has the right to engage a third party expert to review or validate the recommendation of any submitted report.

For further information contact the City Permits unit:

E: devpermits@portphillip.vic.gov.au

P: 03 9209 6216 (Mon to Fri 8.30am to 5pm)

M: City Permits, City of Port Phillip, Private Bag 3, St Kilda VIC 3182

Links:

Significant Tree Application: <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/significant-tree-permit.htm>

Local Law 1: <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/Local-Law-No1-Community-Amenity-2013-final.pdf>

Our enquiries counter at St Kilda Town Hall
is open from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday
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www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/road_permits.htm