

PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT – FORESTRY DIVISION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I know if it is a city tree?

If the tree is between the street and sidewalk it is usually a city tree. If there isn't a sidewalk we measure the distance from the center of the road to determine the property lines. (Please check with the Forestry office for the measurements).

2. A tree is on or near an alley, how do I know if it is my responsibility or the city's?

City Ordinance Subsection 9.109 [Maintenance of Alleys and Parkways](#)

“A property owner shall...be responsible for maintaining...an alley or alleyway to the centerline.”

3. How do I get my city tree trimmed?

Call 456-3232 and an employee of the Public Services Department - Forestry Division will inspect the tree, determine what needs to be done, and schedule a time to do the work.

4. Does the city trim private trees?

The city only trims private trees if they are low over the street or sidewalk, and then only the limbs that are encroaching into the right of way.

5. Do City Forestry crews trim around wires?

No, Consumers Energy has its own tree trimming crews. They can be reached at 1-800-477-5050.

6. What can be done about tree limbs from a neighbor's property overhanging my property?

Ask the neighbor if they will take care of it or give you permission to take care of it.

7. Will the city charge me for work performed on a city tree?

No, there is no charge for forestry services.

8. Do City Forestry employees paint wounds and saw cuts?

No, studies have shown that the tree will heal faster if left uncovered.

9. A tree on private property has an insect/disease problem. Can the City Forester look at it?

No, a private arborist needs to be contacted.

10. Will the city plant a tree in the public right-of-way at my address?

The city policy is to replace any tree that is removed. If you have no trees and would like a tree planted within the right-of-way the city will do that for a \$50.00 fee. Please call 456-3232 if you are interested.

11. After a city tree is removed there is still an ugly stump. What can be done with the stump?

The city will grind the stump 12” below grade and fill the space with topsoil and grass seed.

12. When does the city plant trees?

Currently the city plants all of their trees in the spring while the trees are still dormant.

13. What can I do to help the trees in front of my property?

Watering your tree with a slight trickle from a hose can help root growth and soil moisture. This should be done twice a week for 30 minutes during the summer months. Applying mulch can also help with soil moisture and keeps equipment from damaging the trunk of a tree.

14. Is it okay to attach signs, bird/ squirrel feeders, swings, holiday lights, etc. to public, street trees?

No, nothing should be attached to public trees for the good health of the tree, and the safety of the public.

15. Will the city top public trees to lower them?

No! This unprofessional practice, shortens the life of the tree, and makes them more susceptible to storm damage.

16. Will the city spray public trees with aphids or other bugs in them?

No, Based on recommendations from Michigan State University, the expense and harm to the environment does not warrant it.

17. Does the city remove private dead trees that are hanging over public property (streets and parks)?

No, only trees growing at least 50% on public property are removed or pruned by city crews.

18. What can I do about tree roots clogging my sewer line?

Tree roots will only enter a sewer line that has been cracked. They are not the cause of the crack they only enter the pipe after breakage. A healthy tree cannot be removed to alleviate sewer backups. A permanent solution would be to have a licensed plumber repair your sewer line.