

ABOUT THE CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STREET TREE ORDINANCE

Two changes to San José's Street Tree Ordinance took effect in August 2003 that affect all San José property owners. Street trees are along the street, usually between the curb and sidewalk, and it is the responsibility of property owners to maintain street trees adjacent to their property.

Tree Pruning

The first change allows pruning of street trees without a permit, if the property owner uses a tree service company that has registered with the City of San José Department of Transportation. Companies that have registered with the City agree to abide by the City's tree pruning standards. A list of currently registered tree companies can be obtained by calling the City Arborist Office at (408) 277-2762, or by accessing the link on the City of San José website at: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6692>. A trimming permit is not required when addressing an immediate dangerous public safety condition involving a tree. The City Arborist Office, however, does need to be notified of such emergency pruning work within two business days.

Seller Disclosure Requirement

The second change to the ordinance requires a disclosure when residential property within San José is sold. San José requires street trees in the public right of way. For corner lots, the standard is a minimum of three street trees, while for interior lots between the corners of a block the standard is at least one tree in the right-of-way. Along with other disclosures that are made during the sale, the seller must disclose to the buyer the status of the property's compliance with the street trees requirement.

If the property owner feels that, for reasons of public safety, there are conditions that may prevent the planting of any of these trees, the property owner can contact the City Arborist Office at (408) 277-2762 to have the situation evaluated.

The City of San José's office called "Our City Forest" is a one-stop resource for residents to obtain planting permits, information about the types of street trees, and planting materials, including trees, stakes and root barriers. Our City Forest also provides planting assistance, if needed, as well as information on proper watering and tree care methods. For more information, contact Our City Forest at (408) 998-7337. Street tree planting permits are also available from the City Arborist Office.

Residents having questions about changes to the Street Tree Ordinance should contact the City of San José Department of Transportation Arborist Office at (408) 277-2762.

(Information provided by the City of San José, California)