

Tree Removal Procedures

Tree removals in Tampa require a permit except under specific circumstances. If a homeowner removes a tree without the required permit or the correct paperwork, they could be subject to a fine up to \$15,000.

To help you navigate the rules, below are some excerpts from the Tampa websites and links to the complete websites, which will have the complete and most up-to-date information.



Tree Removal Permits

- All removals of trees 5” in DBH or above (excluding [invasive species](#)) require a permit for removal ([Apply Online](#)).
- Grand Trees* (32” or greater in DBH) require special circumstances for removal – if the tree is not in hazardous condition, it may require a Variance Review Board, City Council, or other public process decision to allow the removal.
- Complete information: <https://www.tampa.gov/construction-services/tree-permitting/tree-resources>

Tree Removal Statutory Exemption

The following requirements must be met in order for a property owner to utilize the Florida Statute § 163.045 to be exempt from the City of Tampa’s tree removal permitting requirements:

- **The property owner must possess “documentation” at the time of removal:** “documentation” means an onsite assessment performed in accordance with the tree risk assessment procedures outlined in Best Management Practices – Tree Risk Assessment, Second Edition (2017) by an arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) or a Florida licensed landscape architect and signed by the certified arborist or licensed landscape architect; **and**

- **The documentation must establish that the tree poses an “unacceptable risk” to persons or property:** A tree poses an “unacceptable risk” if removal is the only means of practically mitigating its risk below moderate, as determined by the tree risk assessment procedures outlined in Best Management Practices – Tree Risk Assessment, Second Edition (2017); **and**
- **The tree is located on “residential property”:** Residential property is limited to a single-family, detached building located on a lot that is actively used for single-family purposes and that is either a conforming use or a legally recognized nonconforming use.

Complete information: <https://www.tampa.gov/construction-services/tree-information/interpretation-tree-removal-statutory-exemption>

Tree Size

Trees are measured by DBH.

- Diameter breast height (“DBH”): The diameter, in inches, of a tree trunk measured at four and one-half (4½) feet above existing grade.

From Tampa Code of Ordinances, Section 27-43. - Definitions