



Town of Williamsburg

Tree Warden

(413) 268-8405 burgyhighway@burgy.org

TREE REMOVAL PERMITS

Anyone applying for a building or driveway permit which involves cutting, removing, or pruning trees along the road within the public right of way must obtain permission from the Tree Warden in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws.

No one may plant, trim, cut or remove a public shade tree without permission from the Tree Warden. Any tree greater than one and one half inches in diameter may not be removed without a tree hearing, unless the tree "is deemed to obstruct, endanger, hinder or incommode persons traveling" on a roadway.

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87 and Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, section 15C govern public shade trees.

Which trees are public trees?

- All trees within the "public way" are public shade trees under the care and control of the Williamsburg Tree Warden. If only a part of the tree is in the public way, it is a town shade tree.
 - The public way is the public land including the road and alongside the road. Roads can be a width of 33.5 feet to 50.5 feet depending on the road acceptance vote. The center of the road is not necessarily the center of the public way.
- All trees along a scenic road within the public right of way. All Williamsburg roads are designated scenic roads, excluding Route 9 and Route 143.
- Examples of public shade trees include:
 - Any tree located between the road and a property marker;
 - Trees located between the edge of the road and a stone wall along the road.

If you have any doubt about a tree, you should not proceed with any action before contacting the Tree Warden!

Permit Process:

- Mark the proposed public shade trees to be trimmed or removed and mark your boundary pins.
- Contact the Tree Warden by phone or email to set up a time to view the trees.
- A joint hearing will be scheduled by the Tree Warden and Planning Board for identified town trees.
- A hearing notice will be posted once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be at least less than seven days before the day of the hearing.
- A hearing notice must also be posted in two or more public places in town and upon the tree(s) at least seven days before the hearing.
- The hearing notice shall include the time and place of the hearing and identify the size, type and location of the shade tree(s) to be cut down or removed.
- The applicant / landowner will receive a letter from the Tree Warden and Planning Board providing written consent or denial of the request.

The public is advised to allow time for the permit process