

## Code Enforcement Ordinances

Everything you want to know about local ordinances is listed below. The ordinances have been shortened and simplified to ease reading.

### **Sidewalks MUST be kept clear**



### Explaining ordinances to homeowner

- With-in most city limits, homeowners are financially responsible for all tree work on their property, including trees located on public rights-of-way. Homeowners should be aware that if they will be paying a company for tree work, that company **MUST** be licensed. This ensures that the company has insurance and, through testing, they have demonstrated the skills necessary to produce good work. **Be wary of fly-by-night tree services.** Each year, individuals will come into town, offer their services as tree trimmers, and charge outrageous prices, collect money for the work up front and then leave town.
- Suppression of disease and insect breakouts are also a high priority. The Forestry program is based on good sanitation efforts. Most health and safety issues can be avoided by keeping the forest clean and maintained routinely.

### Relating To Traffic

- Vegetation and traffic issues resulting in hazardous situations are the most important pieces of our ordinances. These are the ordinances we use for vegetation issues surrounding traffic signs, sidewalks, clear vision zones for vehicles, and other related vehicle and pedestrian traffic/vegetation problems. The following is in summary to ordinances used and may not follow the related Municipal Code word for word.
  1. The Forestry Manager has the authority to remove from the parkways, or cause to be removed from the parkways, any and all trees, shrubs, plants and boughs which interfere with the proper use of the parkways for sidewalk purposes or which create a traffic hazard. No such removal shall be carried out unless the Forestry Manager had made an express written finding that the trees, shrubs, plants or boughs do interfere with the use of the parkways for sidewalk purposes or that they do create a traffic hazard, and no such removal shall be made until after a ten-day written notice of intention to do so has been furnished to the owner or person in possession and until the tree(s) or plant(s) to be removed have been posted for at least seven (7) days with a sign notifying the public of the contemplated removal.
  2. It shall be the duty of all owners or persons in possession of property within the City to refrain from planting trees within the ISD area of any street corner (see ISD below) as defined in the description of clear vision zone of a corner lot.
  3. No tree trimmer shall remove or trim any tree in a parkway or other public grounds without first obtaining a permit from the Forestry Manager, after paying the fees

- required. The Forestry Manager shall not issue a permit unless the tree to be removed or trimmed is dead or dangerous to persons or property or interferes with the proper use of parkways for sidewalk purposes or creates traffic hazards.
4. Intersection obstruction-free area shall mean that area which shall be required to be maintained in order to preserve the sight, distance and safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, by requiring an unobstructed intersection sight distance (ISD) area. ISD is the unobstructed line of sight necessary for most drivers stopped at an intersection to see an approaching vehicle to avoid a collision. When the lines of sight for both left and right directions are combined, a sight triangle is formed. There should be no visual obstructions over thirty-six (36) inches higher than the street level in this triangle.
  5. Trees which overhang streets must be kept clear to a minimum of **13' over the streets.**
  6. Trees which overhang sidewalks must be kept clear to a minimum of **8' over the sidewalk.**
  7. Trees, shrubs, hedges and other plant materials must be trimmed back within the inside edge of all sidewalks **vertically to a minimum of 8' to allow safe pedestrian travel over such sidewalks.**
  8. All traffic signs (stop signs, school signs, speed limit signs, etc.) must be kept visually free of vegetation.

### **Miscellaneous Ordinances**

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1. All parkway tree trimmings or removals must be done by a licensed contractor with proper permits.
2. The Forestry Department has the authority to authorize trimming or removal of trees or other plant growth in emergency situations where there is an immediate danger to persons or property.
3. Any cotton bearing trees such as cottonwood and silver poplar that have been planted or allowed to grow are prohibited within the city.
4. Clear vision zones must be maintained for the safe passage of vehicles on roadways. Clear vision zones typically exist on corner lots but can exist anywhere vehicular traffic is affected.
5. All trees and shrubs must be maintained behind the inside edge of the sidewalk and curbs and to a minimum of **8' over the sidewalk.**
6. All plantings of trees and shrubs on public right-of-way must have a planting permit, available through our office prior to planting. Without a permit, the planting(s) may be ordered removed.
7. The entire city shall be considered as the specific area or zone within which elms are to be protected. Elm trees, or parts thereof, in a dead or dying condition that are or may serve as breeding places for the European Elm Bark Beetle are a public nuisance and shall be removed and destroyed or buried by the owner of the tree or trees.
8. It is unlawful for any owner or occupant of any premises within his control to maintain trees or store wood furnishing breeding places for the Elm Bark Beetle. Such trees or wood shall include the following:
  - (a) Dead, dying or obviously weakened Elm trees, regardless of species or variety are unlawful;
  - (b) Dead, dying or obviously weakened branches in otherwise healthy Elms are unlawful;
  - (c) Stumps of cut Elm trees on which the bark remains are unlawful;
  - (d) Elm wood cut from trees, whether or not it is diseased, that is cut and piled for fireplace wood stored either indoors or outdoors is unlawful.

## **Relating To Tree Trimmers**

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Tree and shrub trimming and removal companies **MUST** be licensed. In order to obtain a license, they must pass a written and field test. Once that is complete, they must provide proof of insurance, post a surety bond, and pay the yearly license fee. There are certain parameters within which each contractor must work, providing you with the utmost in quality, service and value. This information is a summary of the guidelines by which licensed tree trimmers are regulated.

There are two categories of Tree Trimmers. The **Shade Tree** category pertains to anyone performing tree trimming or removals on trees over 20' in height. The **Ornamental Tree** category pertains to small tree (under 20' in height) trimming and removal and shrub pruning and removals. There is a requirement that anyone providing spraying or the application of pesticides and fertilizers must be licensed as well. In order to obtain this license, contractors must present their applicator's certificate issued by the State of Colorado Department of Agriculture and pay the yearly license fee.

All tree trimming or removals on public rights-of-way must be accompanied by a permit issued by the Forestry Manager. The permit system allows the Forestry Program to monitor and promote proper tree care along the street ways. It also assists in the structure of road lane closures and city-wide coordinated traffic control. In the case of removals on public rights-of-way, the tree must be posted for 7 days prior to the date of removal. The posting is a notification to the public of the reasons for the removal. Once a tree has been removed, the stump must be removed to at least 6" below normal ground line.

**Licensed contractors are NOT allowed to Top trees!** Topping is a very destructive and harmful pruning practice. Topping destroys trees!

Reference: City of Greeley Forestry