



City of Burlingame

Parks & Recreation Department



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NOT OUR TREE...

TREES IN PRIVATE EASEMENT & ALLEYWAYS

Easements are defined as a recorded right or interest in the land that belongs to someone else and which entitles the holder to some use, privilege, or benefit out of or over said land (25.108.060).

Have you ever wondered who takes care of the trees in the easement areas in the City?

City policy identifies trees in City easements as private trees. Although City staff and public utility companies may access such easements to service existing utilities and for safety reasons, the trees in alleyways and easements between properties were not planted by the City and are not maintained or removed by the City. Property owners on either side of the alleyway or easement are generally responsible for the maintenance and/or removal of easement trees.

What if the private tree in the easement is of protected size?

Any easement or alleyway tree situated on privately owned property (as determined by the property deed) that has a trunk circumference of 48" or more, when measured 54" above the natural grade, is a "protected" tree. That means it needs a Protected Tree Removal Permit to remove and is subject to the provisions in Chapter 11.06 of the Burlingame Municipal Code, Urban Reforestation and Tree Protection Ordinance. You can find the permit on the City website at <https://burweblink.burlingame.org/Forms/treep permit>. If the tree is not of protected size, the property owner can remove the tree without a permit.

Did you know?

Public Works hires a contractor once a year to clean out the easements and remove debris, typically in May or June per the Municipal Code 11.08.010 Weed and Rubbish Deemed a Nuisance. The contractor removes trash and cuts the weeds and grass to clear the utilities and have a safe access path.

Who should I call if I have a question about easement trees or debris?

Questions regarding easement trees please contact the Parks Division at 650-558-7330 and If it is an easement debris-related question, contact Public Works at 650-558-7670.