

JAMESTOWN STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS

MAY 2011

APPENDICES F

PUBLIC TREE GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR EXCAVATING WITHIN 15 FEET OF A CITY STREET TREE

WHY WORRY ABOUT TREES?

Chapter 280-12 of the Code of the City of Jamestown, NY states that, "No person shall make any excavation ... within 15 feet of a public tree without first obtaining a permit." Permission is given by the Department of Parks, Recreation & Conservation.

Permission is required because cutting tree roots can kill or injure the tree and seriously endanger the tree's stability, resulting in damage to persons or property.

The same level of care should be taken when working around trees as around other property such as fire hydrants, traffic signals and utility transmission lines. This includes avoiding physical damage to the above and below ground parts. Replacing or compensating the City for a damaged tree can be very expensive if it is damaged by your work.

ROOTS

The roots of trees are concentrated in the top layers of soil. Almost all roots are within 24 inches of the surface and can reach further than the trees height. Several large anchor roots also spread outward and support the tree.

Cutting roots over 4 inches in diameter should not be done without permission. Digging confined to the paved portion of a street will have minimal effect on the tree but digging or piling fill in the tree lawn can be very harmful. Boring underneath is better than trenching right up to the tree, when possible.

WHAT TO DO

If you must excavate within 15 feet of a City tree, contact the Parks Department with the address and every effort will be made to respond that day. Emergency work should be reported within three days. Non-emergency work is subject to the permit process, so please plan ahead.

FINALLY, when excavating, you can protect the life of our trees.

DO NOT:

- Pile fill on terrace or lawn
- Leave excavation open longer than necessary
- Rip, tear or chop roots
- Allow equipment to park on grass
- Crush roots with outriggers
- Bang trunk or benches with equipment
- Cut roots over 4 inches in diameter

DO:

- Consult with Parks Department/notify before digging
- Cut roots cleanly with pruners and saws
- Backfill with top soil at least 12 inches deep in lawn area
- Remember: Trees are valuable

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & CONSERVATION

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