

PALO ALTO TREE ORDINANCE INFORMATION UPDATES
#2 EXCESSIVE PRUNING

PROTECTED TREES

Excessive Pruning

Did you know? Under the new Tree Protection Ordinance you can be cited for excessive pruning of protected status trees.



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

Definition of excessive pruning:
cityofpaloalto.org/treeordinance



In June of 2022, the City of Palo Alto updated its [Tree Protection Ordinance](#). This is a PDF version of the email updates that have been sent out to local Certified Arborists, urban forestry advocates and Tree Care Companies that operate in (or near) Palo Alto.

This second update will highlight changes to the definition of excessive pruning in Palo Alto. Other updates will follow in the coming weeks covering other aspects of the updated ordinance. If you missed an update you can download PDF's of past updates from the list on our [Tree Ordinance Information](#) page.

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#2 EXCESSIVE PRUNING

[PAMC 8.10.020](#) Now defines excessive pruning as:

"Excessive pruning" means any of the following:

- (1) Removal of more than **one-fourth** of the functioning leaf, stem, or root area of a tree in any **twenty-four-month period**.
- (2) Removal of more than **fifteen percent** of the functioning root area of any Quercus (oak) species in any **thirty-six-month period**.
- (3) Any removal of the functioning leaf, stem, or root area of a tree so as to cause a significant decline in health, increased risk of failure, or the unbalancing of a tree.

If a property owner, resident, or tree care company exceeds these limits when pruning a Protected Tree in Palo Alto, they may be subject to receipt of a violation and may be required to pay a fine as outlined in [PAMC 8.10.100](#).

Specific situations such as trees that have been subject to annual pollarding, trees that have been trained into hedges, or damage repair/weight reduction to mitigate a hazard may be exempt from this provision with prior approval from Urban Forestry. When in doubt, reach out!

Thank you for helping us maintain a vibrant and healthy urban forest!



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NEW TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE INFORMATION

