

## TREE CUTTING AND CHIPPING

### FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **Q** - Can a resident cut trees down on their property?

**A** – A resident may take part in normal landscaping activities on their own private property, such as gardening, maintenance or routine arboreal activities or perform small scale planting of ornamental trees, flowers or shrubs or the removal of diseased, dead or damaged trees or trees which are a threat to the health and safety of the owner of the property. (See item #3). Other than those permitted activities, the cutting of ANY trees that are 4-inches in diameter or greater, even on private property, is prohibited without a permit. A permit can be obtained at the Building Department after providing the necessary information. A Tree Removal Permit Application can be found at this website: <http://richmondheightsohio.org/en-us/Residents.aspx>

2. **Q** – Can the owner of a residential parcel cut or trim trees not originating on their own property?

**A** – No person is permitted to cut, trim or injure trees growing on either public property or on another person's private property, except that a person may trim branches of bushes or small trees growing over the property line or through property line fences, provided that such trimming will not injure the bush or tree that is being trimmed. On or near some private parcels within the City there are also special conservation and/or wetland areas and easements on which the cutting of trees is prohibited. If there are questions regarding the status of any land on or around your property, call the Building Department for clarifications.

3. **Q** – Can a person cut, trim, plant or remove trees on the **tree lawn** – that area of the parcel located between the street and the public sidewalk?

**A** – No person may cut, trim or remove a tree that has been placed on the tree lawn. The Service Director of the City of Richmond Heights has charge of all trees located on the tree lawn. If there is an issue with those trees, or if the tree appears to be dead or diseased, the Service Director should be contacted for his input in the matter.

4. **Q** – What are a homeowner's responsibilities insofar as the cutting or trimming of trees and bushes is concerned?

**A** – Homeowners must keep their landscaping in general, and their trees and bushes in particular, neatly trimmed throughout the year. Branches should not impact the dwelling or other structures on the property by resting on their walls or roof. Plantings should not be located so close to structures that their growing root systems will damage walls or foundations. No sidewalk or street may be adversely affected by low-hanging branches or by branches extending sideways on to the edge of the walk. Hedges must be kept neatly trimmed back to the edge of the sidewalk. Bushes located near a street intersection must be trimmed back from the intersection and/or kept low enough (36-inches high or less) to insure a good line of sight for drivers to observe cross-traffic and to maintain safety.

5. Q – Will the City perform chipping of branches for a homeowner?

A –After a storm that has caused limbs or branches to fall from trees, the branches or limbs may be placed on the tree lawn for chipping by the Service Department. Waste Management will also pick up with regular trash pickup the trimmings from the maintenance of small ornamental trees or shrubs on a property if they have been properly bundled and placed on the tree lawn. However, trees cut and removed from a property under the terms of item #1 (above) must be chipped and removed by the property owner or tree removal contractor that was responsible for the tree's removal. In those circumstances, the tree stump must also be removed by grinding.

**Smaller Branches: Waste Management**

**Waste Management** can also pick up small branches. All small twigs and branches that are less than ½ of an inch in diameter should be bundled or bagged and put out for Waste Management. There are a few guidelines to follow for including this material with your regular trash pick-up:

- a. All limbs or shrubbery must be in lengths not to exceed four (4) feet.
- b. The refuse must be bundled and tied, in amounts that are manageable for one person. Pay attention to the weight of your bundles. If it is difficult for you to get to curb, it is probably too heavy for Waste Management to handle.
- c. Place the refuse on your tree lawn near your trash to avoid confusion, and the need for multiple or rolling stops.

6. Q – How can a homeowner arrange branch chipping by the City Service Department?

A – The homeowner may call the Service Department at 216-731-7014 to report the condition and to arrange for a chipping crew to come to their property. In cases of general, neighborhood-wide storm damage, the Service Department will arrange for the chipping of branches on a schedule that shall be arranged by the Service Director as time and manpower become available. See the following schedule:

The City's chipper for large branches goes out each Wednesday and follows the Richmond Heights recycling schedule pattern:

- South of Highland Road, 1st and 3rd week of the month
- North of Highland Road, 2nd and 4th week of the month

The City does not pick up shrubby with roots, and branches must be placed on the tree lawn for pickup. The City can chip anything that is approximately ½ inch to 3 ½ inches in diameter. Anything that is greater than 3 ½ inches in diameter should be cut in 15" lengths and can be used for firewood.

7. Q – Does the City store tree chippings for use by residents as mulch?

A – Yes, the City Service Department provides a limited amount of tree chippings for use by residents as mulch. Call the Service Department at 216-731-7014 for more information.