

TREE PRUNING REGULATIONS FOR THE CITY OF PALM COAST

8/26/13

(Effective adoption date 8/19/08)

To all Contractors and Homeowners Who Prune or Remove Trees,

The City of Palm Coast has certain regulations for the pruning and removal of trees in all zoning districts, including residential. All tree removals require a permit issued by the City. Pruning does not require a permit, but be advised that pruning techniques and safety requirements are regulated by reference to the ANSI A-300, Part 1 standards. This document is available for purchase from many sources via a search on the internet. It is recommended that if your line of work involves trees, you should obtain a copy of this document for guidance.

Pruning of trees is referenced in two places in the Land Development Code:

- (1) Section 11.04.02.A, Tree Replacement Remediation Requirements, which states, *"Each tree destroyed or damaged contrary to the latest ANSI A-300, Part 1 Standards shall be replaced pursuant to Table 11-2 by a desirable type of tree(s), except that in the case of total or effective removal, the total diameter inches of the protected trees removed shall be replaced. In the case of total or effective removal, the minimum replacement size shall be six (6) inch caliper. A mitigation plan consistent with this chapter must be submitted as required by the Land Use Administrator. This plan may require, in part, contribution to the tree bank fund. If contribution is to be made into the tree bank fund, the monetary equivalent amount of such contribution shall be determined pursuant to Subsection 11.02.07. The mitigation plan shall also require mitigation of any other damage to the property. Each tree so damaged or removed shall be considered a separate violation of the LDC."*
- (2) Section 14.02, Glossary, which states the definition of effective removal, *"Effective Removal: A condition of a tree caused by the excessive damage or improper pruning of roots or tree canopy. This includes, but is not limited to, topping, lion tailing, hat racking, or elevation of lower tree branches to a height of more than (1/3) of the total height of the tree (unless tree is a "standard" form tree)."*

Please also see the attached information on palm tree pruning that was provided from the website of Dr. Ed Gilman, University of Florida. Hurricane cuts are not good for palms!

Contractors be advised if you need a ladder or boom truck or other means of elevation of the pruning personnel off the ground, your company must be registered in the proper Business Tax License category of "Tree Surgeon". Businesses licensed under the category of "Landscape Services" must remain on the ground while pruning trees. For more licensing information call (386) 986-3766.

As you can surmise, the City is serious about protecting its tree canopy and caring properly for trees. Mitigation can be expensive and additional fines could be levied by the Code Enforcement Board. If you have any further questions about trees please contact Bill Butler, Landscape Architect at 986-3760 or Carol Bennett, Urban forester/ certified arborist, at 986-3722 for commercial requirements, and John Beaudet, Certified Arborist or Kelsey Johnstone at 986-3758 for residential requirements.

(30) days of disturbance, except that if runoff occurs the owner will be required to sod the area immediately. All areas subject to erosion shall be sodded.

4. Phased Projects

Any development that proposes phasing shall be required to provide the perimeter buffer planting required for all future phases of the project. If existing trees and vegetation are sufficient to provide this buffer, they may be used to satisfy this requirement. The first phase approval shall not be issued until this is done.

B. Acceptance of Improvements

1. Certificate of Occupancy

No certificate of occupancy may be issued until all tree protection barricades or other related items are removed as well as compliance with all plans and specifications on the approved plan has been attained. The Land Use Administrator may deviate from this requirement if delay is due to plant availability limitations or weather conditions affecting availability of sod, plants, or trees. A project may be bonded and issued a certificate of occupancy if the Land Use Administrator determines that an extension of up to sixty (60) days is warranted and the site work landscape and irrigation is covered by a surety given to the City, on a form provided by the City, in the amount of one hundred fifty (150) percent of the estimated value of the unfinished work.

2. As-builts

Landscape and irrigation as-builts are required prior to the certificate of occupancy of the project being issued in any zoning district except for SFR, DPX, and EST. The irrigation as-builts provided to the City shall include certification by a landscape architect for location of water source, rain sensor, valves, clocks, and heads. Approximate underground pipe run locations will be acceptable in lieu of exact locations. Electronic format as-builts are required. As-builts may be bonded according to the procedure as noted in **Subsection 11.03.09.B.1** above.

Section 11.04. Enforcement/Remediation and Penalties

11.04.01. Cease and Desist Orders

The Land Use Administrator may issue a cease and desist order for a maximum of two (2) working days whenever a violation of this subpart has occurred. Upon review of the violation by the Land Use Administrator, the Land Use Administrator may extend the cease and desist order until the violation is brought into compliance and all resulting fines incurred as a result of the violation be paid.

11.04.02. Correction of Violation/Remediation

The City shall take the following actions when a violation of this chapter has occurred in addition to all other available code enforcement remedies:



A. Tree Replacement Remediation Requirements

Each tree destroyed or damaged contrary to the latest ANSI A-300, Part I standards shall be replaced pursuant to **Table 11-2** by a desirable type of tree(s), except that in the case of total or effective removal, the total diameter inches of the protected trees removed shall be replaced. In the case of total or effective removal, the minimum replacement size shall be six (6) inch caliper. A mitigation plan consistent with this chapter must be submitted as required by the Land Use Administrator. This plan may require, in part, contribution to the tree bank fund. If contribution is to be made into the tree bank fund, the monetary equivalent amount of such contribution shall

Directional sign: See *Sign, directional*.

Discharge: Any spilling, leaking, seeping, pouring, misapplying, emitting, emptying, or dumping that may be either accidental or purposeful of any hazardous substance that may negatively impact surface water, soils, or groundwater.

Dock: Fixed or floating structure, including access walkways, platforms, catwalks, mooring pilings, lifts, boathouses, and other associated water-dependent structures used for mooring and accessing watercraft.

Dormer: A dormer is a window that is set vertically on a sloping roof. The dormer has its own roof, which may be flat, arched, or pointed.

Drainage: The control of surface flow of water by man-made facilities such as canals, ditches, culverts, or dikes. It can also refer to the artificial lowering of groundwater and the natural drainage of a site in the predevelopment condition.

Dredging: To excavate underwater material.

Driveway: A private roadway providing access for vehicles to a parking space, garage, dwelling, or other structure.

Duplex: See *Dwelling – Two-family*.

Dwelling or dwelling unit: Any building, portion thereof, or other enclosed space or area used as or intended for use as the home of one (1) family, with separate cooking and housekeeping facilities, either permanently or temporarily.

- 1) *Single-family:* A detached building designed for and occupied by one (1) family as a home, with cooking and housekeeping facilities.
- 2) *Two-family:* A detached building occupied by or designed for occupancy by two (2) families only with separate cooking and housekeeping facilities for each.
- 3) *Multifamily:* A building designed for or occupied by three (3) or more families, with separate cooking and housekeeping facilities for each.

Earth tones: Various rich colors containing some brown. Earth tones are defined herein to include shades of brown, taupe, beige, and gray.

Easement: A grant by a property owner of the use of land for a specific purpose.

Educational facilities: See *Schools*.

* *Effective Removal:* A condition of a tree caused by the excessive damage or improper pruning of roots or tree canopy. This includes, but is not limited to, topping, lion tailing, hat racking, or elevation of lower tree branches to a height of more than one-third (1/3) of the total height of the tree (unless tree is a “standard” form tree).

Egress: An exit.

Elevated building: A nonbasement building built to have the lowest floor elevated above the ground level by solid foundation perimeter walls, pilings, columns (posts and piers), shear walls, or breakaway walls.

Elevation: The placement of a structure above flood level to minimize or prevent flood damages.

Encumbrance: Any claim or restriction on a property's title. Relating to concurrency, an administrative technique within the concurrency management system implemented to avoid over committing available capacity. The encumbering of available capacity is not synonymous with the issuance of a “certificate of concurrency.”

Endangered species: Those animal species listed in Section 39-27.003, FAC and those plant species listed as endangered in 50 Code of Federal Regulations 17.12.

EFFECTIVELY REMOVED
TREE DUE TO IMPROPER
PRUNING

OVER ELEVATED
TREE CANOPY

Business name

Business logo

MORE THAN 1/3
TOTAL HEIGHT
OF TREE



PROPER TREE
MAINTENANCE PRUNING
EXAMPLE



A vertical line with arrows at both ends spans the height of a tree. A horizontal line is drawn across the canopy at approximately two-thirds of the way up. A second horizontal line is drawn at the base of the tree. The segment between the base line and the canopy line is labeled '2/3 TOTAL HEIGHT OF TREE'. The segment between the canopy line and the top of the tree is labeled '1/3 TOTAL HEIGHT OF TREE'.

2/3 TOTAL
HEIGHT OF TREE

1/3 TOTAL
HEIGHT OF TREE

Pruning shade trees in the landscape

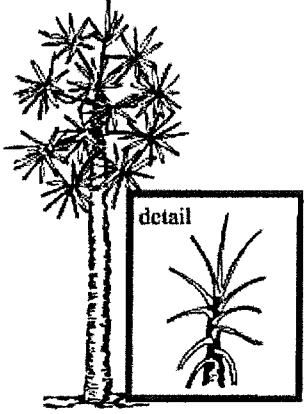
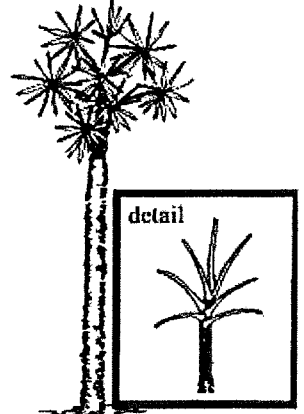
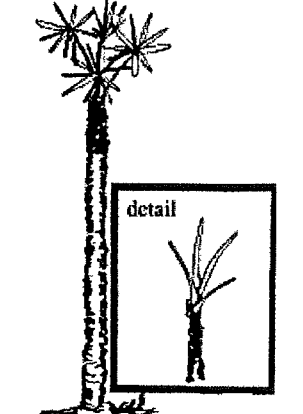
Pruning palms

Edward F. Gilman¹ and Nathan J. Eisner²

Introduction: Palms and cycads are often thought of as low maintenance plants; however, most palms require regular pruning to keep them attractive and safe. Many palms maintain a set number of live fronds. A regular turnover of foliage occurs as dying lower fronds are replaced by new ones at the apex. These dead fronds are not detrimental to the health of the tree. If there is an excessive number of older yellow fronds determine the cause before pruning. There could be a severe nutrient problem, caused by a potassium or magnesium deficiency, that could worsen if the palm is pruned or fertilized with high nitrogen or the wrong type of fertilizer.

There are several reasons for pruning palms 1) Removing dead and dying lower fronds improves the appearance of a palm. 2) Dead and dying fronds and loose petioles are weakly attached to some palms and can place people and property at risk should they fall from tall palms. People have been severely injured by falling fronds. Dead and dying palm fronds should be removed regularly to reduce this risk. 3) Pruning can remove fruit clusters, especially in public landscapes where falling fruit and flower debris can be messy as well as hazardous. Some palms generate copious amounts of seedlings near the plant. Removing flowers or fruit reduces the number of potential seedlings. 4) Remove sprouts from the base of the trunk.

Objectives: 1) Remove dead and dying fronds and developing flowers and fruits to reduce risk and enhance aesthetics; 2) remove sprouts or stems to maintain one trunk.

| before pruning | after pruning | over-pruning |
|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |
| <p>Consider removing lower fronds that are chlorotic or dead. There is no biological reason to remove live green fronds on palms. There is no research supporting the notion that removing live green fronds reduces future pruning requirements.</p> | <p>Remove lower fronds that are dead or more than about half chlorotic. Do not remove green fronds or the palm could become stressed. (If you decide to remove green fronds, do not remove those growing horizontally or pointed upward.)</p> | <p>Over-pruned palms look terrible and could attract pests. In the detail above you can see that many upright fronds were removed. Why remove green fronds when the palm was planted for its tropical look. That tropical look results from live green fronds.</p> |

Execution: It is preferable not to remove live, healthy fronds. If they must be removed, however, avoid removing fronds that are growing horizontally or those growing upward. Fronds removed should be severed close to the petiole base without damaging living trunk tissue. There is little reason to shave or sand the trunk smooth. The pineapple shape crafted at the base of date palms is not necessary for good health of the palm.

Further information:

- 1) Gilman, E.F. 2002. Illustrated guide to pruning, second edition. Delmar Publishers, Albany, NY. 330pp.
- 2) Gilman, E.F. 2001. Illustrated pruning and planting CDROM. Horticipia, Inc., Purcellville, VA.
- 3) American National Standards Institute (ANSI A300). 1995. *American National Standard for Tree Care Operations – Tree, Shrub and Other Woody Plant Maintenance – Standard Practices*. New York: American National Standards Institute.

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