

**Town of Grand Isle
Tree Policy**

A) Purpose and Intent:

- 1) It is the purpose of this policy to promote, protect, and enhance public health, safety, and general welfare by providing a policy governing the planting, maintenance, protection, and removal of trees, shrubs, and other woody plant material within public rights-of-way and public places within the Town of Grand Isle.
- 2) It is the intent of the Grand Isle Selectboard that the terms of this policy shall be construed so as to promote:
 - a) the planting, maintenance, protection, and survival of desirable trees, shrubs, and other woody plant materials within the Town and in accordance with standards and practices recognized by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), and the Urban & Community Forestry Program, Vermont Department of Forests Parks and Recreation, and,
 - b) the protection of community residents and property from damage caused or threatened by storm damaged, diseased and/or insect infested trees, and/or the improper planting, maintenance, or removal of trees, shrubs, and other woody plant material within the Town.

B) Definitions applicable to the Policy:

Public tree, shrub, or other woody plant material: Trees, shrubs, or other woody plant material located on any property owned or controlled by the Town on any public street, alley, median, sidewalk, highway, park, cemetery, forest, other right-of-way, school sites, and easements. For this policy, public trees, shrubs, and woody plant material shall be further defined in general as tree(s).

C) Authority and Administration of the Policy:

The Selectboard shall appoint, annually, a Town Tree Warden. The Tree Warden shall have knowledge of ISA recognized standards and practices and shall be experienced in the planning for, and planting, maintenance, protection, and removal of public trees. The Tree Warden, in addition to State Public Shade Tree statute Ref. 2502 Title 24/ Chapter 33 & 67, and all other applicable State statutes, shall have the authority and administrative responsibility to apply the policy. The Tree Warden shall advise any regulatory boards, planning boards, Selectboard, Public Works Director, and the Zoning Administrative Officer of the Town in matters of tree selection, planting, health, care, maintenance, and removal as needed.

D) Public Tree Care

The Town shall have the right to plant, prune, maintain, remove, and protect trees within the Town right-of-ways and on Town owned land, as may be necessary to insure public safety or to preserve or enhance the symmetry and beauty of such public grounds as set forth in the following guidelines.

1) Selection and Planting of Public Trees

Tree species shall be selected from the booklet, "Recommended Trees for Vermont Communities", published by Vermont's Urban & Community Forestry Program, a copy of which shall be maintained by the Zoning Administrative Officer. The planting of trees shall conform to standards and recommendations found in the aforementioned publication, pertinent ISA publications, and any applicable American National Standards Institute standards.

Trees shall be planted based on available green space, soil volume, site specific considerations, and the avoidance of infrastructure conflicts. Trees purchased, donated, or by any other means planted in public spaces shall conform to American Standard for Nursery Stock, ANSI Z60.1. All newly planted public trees will carry a three year maintenance and replacement guarantee.

2) Maintenance of Public Trees

- a) All tree maintenance and pruning shall conform to ISA and ANSI A300.
- b) Lawn care contractors employed by the Town shall be directed to avoid damaging tree trunks and branches with lawn care equipment.
- c) Unless specifically authorized by the Tree Warden, no person shall intentionally damage, cut, carve, transplant, or remove any tree: attach any rope, wire, nails, advertising posters, or other contrivance to any tree: allow any gaseous, liquid or solid substance which is harmful to such trees to come in contact with said trees: or set fire or permit any fire to burn when such fire or the heat thereof will injure any portion of any tree.
- d) Topping of trees shall be prohibited.

3) Removal of Public Trees

The Town, in consultation with the Tree Warden, may remove or cause to be removed, any tree or part thereof which is in an unsafe condition or which by reason of its nature is injurious to the municipal infrastructure or other public improvements, or is affected with any injurious fungus, disease, insect, or other pest.

4) Removal of Public Tree Stumps

The removal of any stumps of trees shall not be mandatory unless it is deemed necessary by the Town to allow for a replanting or other reasons as may arise.

5) Removal of Private Trees

The Town and the Tree Warden shall follow all applicable State statutes when dealing with the removal of hazardous, dead, insect infected, and diseased trees on private property, when such trees constitute a hazard to life and/or property or constitute a potential threat to other trees within the Town.

6) Pruning and Corner Clearance

It shall be the responsibility of each property owner of any tree overhanging any public road or right-of-way within the Town to prune the branches so that such branches shall not obstruct the light from any street lamp or obstruct the view of any street intersection, so that there shall be a clear area above the travel surface to allow for pedestrian and vehicular traffic and safety. Said owners shall remove all dead, diseased, insect infested, or dangerous trees, or broken or decayed limbs which constitute a threat to public safety. The Town shall have the right, in consultation with the Tree Warden, to prune any tree on private property when such tree interferes with the proper spread of light along the street from a streetlight, or interferes with visibility of any traffic control device, sign, sight distance, or sight triangle at intersections, Town roads, or right-of-ways. Pruning shall conform to applicable ANSI and ISA standards.

7) Protection of Public Trees During Construction

Public trees shall be protected from construction related damage in accordance with standards defined in the publications: "Tree Preservation During Construction" by Gary Johnson, and "Protecting Trees from Construction Damage, A Homeowners Guide, by Johnson, Rathke, & Miller, copies of which shall be maintained by the Zoning Administrative Officer.

E) Developments

In Planned Unit Developments (PUD), Historical Planned Unit Developments (HPUD), and in minor, major, and single lot subdivisions, where the potential exists for the establishment of public trees, the Selectboard shall encourage the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board, and the Zoning Administrative Officer to consult with the Tree Warden during the plan review process to insure the proper selection, planting, maintenance, protection, and care of trees. The intent of Item (E) is to have the Tree Warden act in an advisory capacity, and only when proposed developments and/or subdivisions have existing and/or the potential for public trees.

F) Review by the Grand Isle Selectboard

The Grand Isle Selectboard shall have the right to review the conduct, acts, and decisions of the Tree Warden. Any person may appeal any ruling or order of the

Tree Warden within 30 days to the Selectboard, who may hear the matter and make a final decision.