Below is a brief position description of the Vermont Tree Warden position. This is sample language and can be adapted to meet a community’s specific interests or needs.

**What is a Tree Warden?**

A tree warden is the appointed individual in each Vermont community responsible for making determinations about the care and stewardship of shade trees in public ways and places. State law in Vermont, as in all New England states, requires the legislative body of each municipality to appoint a tree warden.

**Definitions**

Municipal shade trees include those trees planted by the municipality in downtowns and village centers or on other municipally-owned land, and trees on public property or in public right-of-ways that have been designated as shade trees.

**Required Responsibilities**

The tree warden's duties and responsibilities are officially outlined in the Vermont Tree Warden Statutes that were first adopted in 1904 and last amended in 2020.

The duties of the tree warden include enforcing all laws relating to shade trees and posting public notice of the intent to cut or remove a shade tree or group of shade trees. As an appointed official, the tree warden may also perform other related duties as designated by the selectboard.

A tree warden may also:

* Adopt (with approval of the selectboard) a shade tree preservation plan;
* Remove or cause to be removed from the public way or places any trees that are infected by a tree pest or that constitute a public hazard;
* Determine that an owner or lessee of abutting property has sufficiently controlled all insect pests or tree diseases upon the trees within the limits of the public way or place abutting the property and determine that removing the trees is unnecessary;
* Propose to the selectboard the rules, ordinances, or regulations for the planting, protection, care, or removal of public shade trees.

Tree wardens may also do the following, but only with the consent of the selectboard:

* Enter into financial or other agreements with the owners of land adjoining or facing public ways and places for the purpose of encouraging and effecting the shade tree preservation plan;
* Enter into agreements with other municipalities to provide tree warden services or training;
* Cooperate with federal, State, county, or other municipal governments, agencies, or other public or private organizations or individuals; and
* Accept on behalf of the municipality any funds, equipment, supplies, or services from organizations and individuals, or others for use in carrying out the law

**Qualifications**

There are no required qualifications for Vermont tree wardens. Ultimately, the selectboard must appoint the tree warden.

**Ways to Expand the Role**

Many tree wardens expand upon the basic responsibilities of the role and play an active role in their local urban and community tree stewardship efforts. This can include leading or assisting with public tree inventories and tree health assessments, hosting Arbor Day celebrations, participating in the municipal tree committee or board as an ad hoc member, or developing municipal bylaws and plans to ensure the long-term maintenance and management of the public tree population.

**Learn more**

Learn more about Vermont Tree Wardens at VTcommunityforestry.org/treewarden.