

Tree Cutting in the FVRD Electoral Areas

Individual properties within the FVRD Electoral Areas may be subject to several requirements prior to any cutting or removal of trees. If you are planning on cutting down trees on your property, you may be required to apply for a permit. *This information pamphlet provides a summary of these requirements.*

If you are planning on cutting or removing trees on your property, the questions below will narrow down what your next steps may be:

- ✓ **Is the property in a Development Permit Area?**
 - You may need to apply for a Development Permit.
- ✓ **Is the property in the Chilliwack River Tree Cutting Bylaw area?**
 - You may need to apply for a Tree Cutting Permit.
- ✓ **Are the trees on Crown Land?**
 - FVRD Bylaws do not apply.
 - Please refer to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations:

Chilliwack Natural Resource District

46360 Airport Road

Chilliwack, B.C. V2P-1A5

Phone: (604) 702-5700

Fax: (604) 702-5711

Website: <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/dck/>

Note: It is recommended that you speak to FVRD staff prior to cutting or removing trees on your property.

Development Permit Areas

Within the Official Community Plan (OCP) of each Electoral Area, Development Permit Areas (DPA) have been designated to minimize the potential for damage to property or risk of life, and to protect the natural environment. Cutting or removing trees may increase the risk of erosion and slope hazards, posing a threat to human life and/or damaging buildings and property. For properties within geohazard DPAs, prior to any alteration of land (including cutting or removing trees), a landowner may be required to apply for a Development Permit. In addition to other requirements, an application for a permit would involve a certified site-specific geotechnical report by a qualified professional geotechnical engineer.

Additionally, if the property is located within a Riparian Assessment Area (RAR), any alteration of land or disturbance of soil or vegetation within 30m of the watercourse will require a Riparian Areas Development Permit. Cutting or removing trees may impact fish habitat within a Riparian Area, therefore it is important that landowners go through the process of obtaining a permit where one is required. In addition to other requirements, an application for a permit would involve an assessment report by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).

A Development Permit **is** required when:

- The site is within a geohazard DPA and the tree removal constitutes an alteration of land. Please note that in some cases, minor tree removal may not be considered an alteration of land. This can be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- The site is with an Official Community Plan area and the tree removal is within 30m of the high water mark of a stream (i.e. within a Riparian Assessment Area).

Please be aware there are exemptions that do not require a Development Permit. FVRD staff can check for exemptions within the specific DPAs. For example, a Development Permit **is not typically** required when:

- A Certified Arborist or Registered Professional Forester determines the tree is an imminent safety risk to people or buildings.

Note: If you are unsure of whether your property is in a DPA or RAR area, FVRD Planning staff can assist you.

Fraser Valley Regional District Electoral Area "E" Tree Cutting Bylaw No. 0014, 1997

Electoral Area 'E' has its *Tree Cutting Bylaw No. 0014, 1997* in place to regulate or prohibit the cutting of trees. Under this Bylaw there are penalties when removing or altering (i.e. topping) a tree on a lot prior to obtaining a Tree Cutting permit.

To find out if the property is within the Tree Cutting Bylaw area, please refer to the Schedule 'C' map within *Bylaw No. 0014*, found at:

<http://www.fvrd.ca/EN/main/government/bylaws.html>.

A Tree Cutting permit **is** required when:

- Cutting down 20 or more trees in one year,
- Cutting down 5 or more trees on land with a slope more than 30%,
- Cutting down trees growing within 30 m of the natural boundary of a water course.

A Tree Cutting permit **is not** required to:

- Cut down a tree located within a Building Site,
- Cut down a tree or limb of tree if:
 - a) It has been severely damaged by natural causes,
 - b) It is in danger of falling and injuring a person on the property.

Note: The Tree Cutting Bylaw requirements listed above do not apply to properties within Development Permit Areas.

Fees & Fines

For a **Development Permit**:

- \$250 for residential, agricultural or accessory uses in a Geotechnical, Environmental or Riparian Development Permit Area.

For a **Tree Cutting Permit**:

- \$25 for first 20 trees,
- \$5 for each additional tree over 20.

Fines apply if a tree is removed without a permit within the Tree Cutting Bylaw area.

FVRD Planning staff are available from Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm at the Chilliwack office.