

## RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TREE REMOVAL

### ▶▶ Tree removal from private property

- Your own private property:  
If a tree from your property damages your neighbor's property, you are solely responsible.
- Your neighbor's private property:  
A tree solely on your neighbor's private property is their right and responsibility to care for the tree.

### ▶▶ Boundary tree removal

- Boundary trees:  
are trees along property lines in which both property owners share ownership of the tree, and neither one can unilaterally cut down the tree without the other's permission.
- Both owners maintain equal responsibility for the care and maintenance of the shared boundary tree.

### ▶▶ If your neighbor's tree along your property line is a hazard:

- First, notify your neighbor of the issue. If they refuse to address the situation, you may remove the part of the tree that crosses over into your property.

### ▶▶ If your neighbor's tree along your property line is **not** hazardous:

- If your neighbor's tree falls onto your property and is not shown to be a hazard, the neighbor will not be deemed negligent.

It is not legal to cut down a tree on someone else's property because it threatens your property.

However, a court may be able to order your neighbor to address the issue.

Visit <https://library.weconservepa.org/guides/197-tree-law-in-pennsylvania> for more information.

Tree removal from public area: If a tree has fallen in the middle of a public road, contact 911.

### Remove your trees when:

- ▶▶ 50% or more of the tree is visibly damaged or there are structural defects that could injure people or damage property.
- ▶▶ Visible trunk damage, internal decay, rotten or hollow trunk, tree rot at base of tree, large, dead branches, sprouts coming from base of tree, unstable base/tree is leaning.

### ➤ Tree infestation

- Common invasive species: The Spotted Lanternfly causes serious damage to trees and crops and threatens the PA agricultural industry. It is imperative to kill them upon identification. (approx. 1" long and ½" wide)
- If you see a Spotted Lanternfly, report it online via: <https://services.agriculture.pa.gov/SLFReport/> or call 1-888-4BADFLY
- For more information, visit: [https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Plants\\_Land\\_Water/PlantIndustry/Entomology/spotted\\_lanternfly/SpottedLanternflyAlert/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Plants_Land_Water/PlantIndustry/Entomology/spotted_lanternfly/SpottedLanternflyAlert/Pages/default.aspx)



### Tree Ordinances:

- Some ordinances may require a permit while others prohibit all trees or trees of certain species from being planted in some areas. If you are working on planting, pruning or removing a street tree in your municipality, check your local ordinances before you get started.
  - For more information regarding tree ordinances by county, types, and development strategies, visit: <https://library.weconservepa.org/guides/37-tree-ordinance/>

### Tree Removal:

- Need assistance and/or information regarding tree removal on your property? Contact the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry. Each PA county has an assigned service forester. Find your county forester at this link:  
<https://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=3593430&DocName=Service%20Forester%20List%20March%202021.pdf>

**Disclaimer:** U.S. Senator Bob Casey's office cannot provide legal advice. Seek legal aid from:

- PA Bar Association – Pro Bono: <https://www.pabar.org/site/Probono-Services>
- PA Bar Association – Lawyer Referral Service: <https://www.pabar.org/site/For-Lawyers/Lawyer-Referral-Service>
- PA Legal Aid Network – <https://palegalaid.net/find-legal-help/apply>

### State resources:

- The **Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)** maintains and preserves state parks and forests, provides information on state ecological and geological resources, and establishes community conservation partnerships with grants and technical assistance. Visit: [www.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us).

- The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) provides events, activities, and publications for novice gardeners and experienced horticulturists. Through its Philadelphia Green program, PHS supports neighborhood and public landscape greening through various initiatives. Through its Tree Tenders program, it offers free training on community tree planting and stewardship. Visit: [www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org).
- The Penn State Extension Urban Forestry Program provides technical assistance and education to municipalities, volunteer organizations, and agencies interested in better planning and management of trees and natural resources. Visit: [www.sfr.psu.edu](http://www.sfr.psu.edu).

(Source: <https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/mit015.pdf>)

