



**CITY OF EASTHAMPTON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**
50 Payson Avenue, Easthampton, MA 01027
www.easthamptonma.gov
413-529-1463

TREE CUTTING ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL APPLICATION

Trees in Jurisdictional Areas to the Conservation Commission perform important ecological functions by providing habitat for wildlife, reducing flood elevations, stabilizing soil, assisting nutrient uptake that improves water quality, and providing shade that contributes to healthy vegetation and cool water. Even dead trees provide habitat for cavity nesters and organic nutrients for soil. However, some trees can become hazardous to residents and may be required to be cut. A hazard tree is one that is identified by a certified arborist to likely cause damage to a structure or maintained portion of property (i.e. driveway, leaching field, parked equipment, home, shed, etc.). The Conservation Commission has developed this Tree Cutting Application to provide a means of reviewing and recording tree cutting/alteration in Jurisdictional Areas, while also accommodating the urgency sometimes associated with hazardous trees.

The Jurisdictional Areas associated with the Conservation Commission include:

- **Wetland Resource Areas:** Defined as 100-year flood zones, wetlands, streams, ponds, & swamps, etc.
- **Buffer Zones:** Land within 100 feet of a Wetland Resource Area.
- **Riverfront Areas:** Land within 200 feet of a perennial stream.

No trees may be cut/alterd from within any Jurisdictional Areas unless permission has been granted by the Conservation Commission/Conservation Agent and special criteria to do so are met. This policy applies to all Jurisdictional Areas, whether natural or landscaped. Landscaped areas are those locations comprised predominantly of lawn or landscaping shrubs/plants. Natural areas are those areas comprised predominantly of naturally occurring vegetation.

Criteria for Approval:

- All trees to be cut/alterd must be identified as hazardous by a certified arborist (ISA or MAA).
- No more than five (5) trees may be cut/alterd via administrative approval by the Conservation Agent.
- As much of the trunk must remain as is possible after removal of all hazardous portions. (The remaining trunk will serve as potential snag habitat.)
- All stumps within any Jurisdictional Area cannot be removed.
- Tree cutting must be planned to take place when the ground is sufficiently stable. Either frozen or during a particularly dry period. Alternatively, mats/pads may be used as long as it will not require additional vegetation removal to install them.
- All tree cutting equipment must remain on landscaped or paved areas and outside of natural areas.
- Any trees proposed to be cut to ground level within any Wetland Resource Area must be mitigated.
 - Mitigation Criteria:

- For any tree >12” diameter at ~4.5ft off the ground (DBH) - the owner shall plant one native tree or two native shrubs for each large tree cut.
- For any tree ≤ 12” diameter at breast height - the owner shall plant one native shrub or one native tree for each small tree cut.
- Replacement Tree Requirements:
 - Be planted as close to the cut tree as possible or closer to the wetland edge.
 - Be a species native to Hampshire County according to the latest edition of “The Vascular Plants of Massachusetts: A County Checklist” with a diameter size of 1” or greater.
 - Survive two growing seasons. Applicant/owner must describe steps to be taken to maintain tree for at least 24 months after date that it is planted.
- Waivers: A property owner may request a waiver (in writing) for any required mitigation planting. Mitigation may be waived, for example, in the following cases subject to the discretion of the Commission:
 - The tree(s) were significantly damaged in a storm event.
 - The property is heavily wooded and growing new shrubs or trees would be difficult.
 - The tree to be removed is already dead.

Review Process:

- Conservation Agent Administrative Review/Approval – The Conservation Agent may administratively approve the cutting/alteration of up to five (5) trees within Jurisdictional Areas if all Criteria for Approval can be met. The Conservation Agent may also require formal Conservation Commission Review/Approval at their discretion.
- Formal Conservation Commission Review/Approval – If tree cutting/alteration in a Jurisdictional Area is proposed beyond what the Conservation Agent is authorized to approve pursuant to this policy, such cutting/alteration may be permitted by the Conservation Commission, provided that the owner files a Request for Determination of Applicability or Notice of Intent, and the Conservation Commission permits such removal. The Conservation Agent may also require formal Conservation Commission Review/Approval at their discretion.

Application Requirements:

- Fill out and submit the Tree Cutting Application Form on Page 3.
- Submit an informal map or sketch that shows the location (if known) of existing Wetland Resource Areas (including Riverfront Area) and the 100-foot Buffer Zone, house, trees, and other relevant features; and the location of proposed trees to be cut (numbered in a way that can be cross-referenced with application). The Conservation Agent can help prepare a map from our website: <https://www.axisgis.com/EasthamptonMA/>
- The Conservation Agent will perform a site visit.
- If your request complies with the Tree Cutting Policy and all Criteria for Approval, the Agent may approve your request generally within 5 business days.
- For assistance, contact the Conservation Agent by phone at 413-529-1463 or email at Conservation@easthamptonma.gov.



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Tree Cutting Application Form

A. Date: _____

Project Address: _____

Property Owner: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Arborist (Please Attach Assessment): _____

Arborist Contact: _____

B. Jurisdictional Areas in which trees to be cut/alterd are located: (Contact the Conservation Agent for assistance in identifying Jurisdictional Areas.)

In Riverfront Area (land within 200 feet of the bank of a stream or river).

In a Wetland Resource Area (wetland, swamp, pond, stream, or 100-year flood zone, etc.).

In the Buffer Zone to a Wetland Resource Area (land within 100 feet of a wetland, vernal pool, stream bank, lake, etc.).

C. Tree Cutting Request

Tree (Add species if known).	Diameter at ~4.5ft from Ground (DBH)	Tree in Natural or Landscaped area?	Closest distance b/w tree & wetlands (in feet).	Will trunk/branches be removed from the site?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

*(Note: All stumps within any Jurisdictional Areas must remain to maintain site stability.)

General Work Questions (Check “yes” or “no”.)

	Yes	No	Comments
Will all equipment remain on existing lawn/driveway?			
Will there be any expansion of lawn?			
Is there any other type of work proposed in this area?			
Do the trees constitute a threat/hazard? Attach certified arborist assessment.			
What certification is held by the arborist? (ISA or MAA)	N/A	N/A	
When will the tree work take place?	N/A	N/A	Date:

D. Tree Mitigation Requirements and Conditions

The loss of trees cut to ground level within a Wetland Resource Area shall be mitigated as follows:

1. Large trees (>12” diameter at breast height): the owner shall plant 1 native tree sapling or 2 native shrubs for each large tree cut.
2. Small trees (<12” diameter at breast height): the owner shall plant 1 native tree sapling or one native shrub for each small tree cut.

Number of Mitigation Trees Proposed: _____. Number of Mitigation Shrubs Proposed _____.

Please include the Mitigation planting locations on the attached informal map (See Step E). A list of native trees/shrubs can be obtained by contacting the Conservation Agent.

Mitigation Waiver Requested. (Please include explanation of waiver request as attachment or on the back of this application.)

E. Informal Map. The landowner must include an informal map with this Tree Cutting Application

Form. You may use a plot plan printed from Easthampton’s GIS system

<https://www.axisgis.com/EasthamptonMA/> . Contact the Conservation Agent for mapping assistance. The map must show the following:

1. Location of existing Wetland Areas and the 100-foot Buffer Zone/200-foot Riverfront Area, house, trees, & other relevant features.
2. Location of proposed trees to be cut (numbered in a way that can be cross-referenced with Section C. Tree Cutting Request above).
3. Location where proposed mitigation trees or shrubs (if required) will be planted.

Is there anything else you wish to add about your tree cutting request? Provide any additional information as an attachment to this application.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____