

The Conservation Commission (SCC) is charged with protection of natural resources in the Town of Stoneham. Under state and town Bylaws and regulations, any work occurring within a state or town resource areas or that may alter or impact any such resource area, including removal of trees, shall require review and approval, emergency certification or written permission from the SCC or the Conservation Administrator.

Tree removal may be reviewed by the Commission at its scheduled meeting or as a part of a public hearing with a -Notice of Intent. The Commission requires that trees that are disturbed (as well as large shrubbery and bushes) be replaced based on a replacement ratio set forth in Replacement Tree and Shrub Schedule for trees removed within one hundred feet of a wetland and 200 feet of a river.

Upon written agreement with SCC and when the SCC make finding that-, in its sole discretion, on-site replacement is not in the best interests of the natural resource areas or when the appropriate replacement ratio cannot be achieved on site, a voluntary contribution deposited into Shade Tree Fund may be accepted in lieu of replacement of one or more trees. These funds will be used at the sole discretion of the Town of Stoneham and the SCC for tree planting, transplanting, and other tree-related needs. Voluntary Shade Tree Fund contributions will be a minimum of \$1050.00 per tree for applicants who are individual homeowners, new subdivisions and commercial uses.

Standard replacement Tree and Shrub

1. Planting within the buffer zone must be a native species or cultivar of a native species approved in advance by the Conservation Commission.
2. A tree six inches or greater in caliper that is cut with a remaining tree trunk that is between 8-15 feet tall above grade (called a snag) does not require the installation of a replacement plantings. This option may be preferred by the Commission when a large tree threatens structures but is within the Zone of Natural Vegetation. These snags provide habitat and food for wildlife.
3. If any tree within the Buffer Zone is cut down without leaving a snag, the tree shall be replaced with new plantings according to the replacement Tree and Shrub schedule below.
4. Replacement plantings must be installed within 180 days of the day the existing tree is cut or at a time specifically approved by the Commission based on growing and planting seasons. Replacement plantings that do not survive for at least two growing seasons must be replaced at the sole cost and expense of the applicant. No Certificate of Compliance shall be issued if the plants have not been established for at least two

growing seasons without an established surety acceptable to the Commission equal to 1.5 times the cost of the trees or shrubbery and the labor and equipment used to remove, dispose of plant and maintain the new trees or shrubberies.

How to Request Approval

Applicants must call or email the Town Conservation Administrator with the following information for instructions on what permit is needed and how to proceed with the work.

If the tree in question is within 100 feet of a wetland or pond, or 200 feet of a river, the property owner shall:

- 1) Provide written notification to the Conservation Commission office which includes:
 - name,
 - address,
 - contact phone and, if available, email,
 - location of tree,
 - size of tree – diameter at breast height (dbh) and approximate height
 - species of tree,
 - water body or wetland nearby,
 - photo(s)
 - sketch plan showing location of tree.
- 2) Provide a letter from a certified arborist stating that the tree(s) poses an immediate threat to property or to public health and safety. If in a resource area a certified wetland scientist must be consulted.
- 3) Receive written permission from the Conservation Office before proceeding with the work. To contact conservation office see <https://www.stoneham-ma.gov/588/Conservation-Commission>

Importance of Native Species and Proper Planting

Replacement trees must be native species selected from the [Recommended Native Plant Materials List](#) and be between four and ten feet tall with a trunk caliper of three inches or more measured at six inches above the root ball. The following guide from the Tree Care Industry Association website at www.treecaretips.org provides instructions for planting your new tree with the best chance for survival.

Hazard Trees

Circumstances may arise when one or two trees become an imminent hazard to property or public safety and need to be removed before an application can be filed with the Commission or before the Commission can meet to review the request in order to avoid such hazard.

In such limited situations, the Commission shall follow this Hazardous Tree Protocol. For three or more trees, the Emergency Certification procedures in the state and Town Wetlands Regulations shall be followed.

Hazardous Tree Protocol

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Replacement tree and shrub schedule

Existing trees to be removed	Replacement Tree and Shrubs			
Size 6" or greater (DBH) of trees to be cut <small>(DBH is diameter at breast height)</small>	Number of deciduous shade trees 2" dbh or greater	Number of evergreen trees 5-6' in height or greater	Number of large shrubs or small trees 5-6' in height or greater	Number of shrubs 2' in height or greater
Replacement Ratios if in resource area.	1 for each tree removed	1 for each tree removed	2 for each tree removed	3 for each tree removed