

Tree Related Issues

Arborists- Arborists are experts and specialists in arboriculture or tree care. Most arborists are members of International Society of Arboriculture or ISA. The city does not have a staff arborist available for general inquiries concerning privately-owned trees. To find and consult with a professional arborist, the following website is helpful: <https://www.treesaregood.org/findanarborist/findanarborist>

City-owned trees- Residents are prohibited from trimming or removing city-owned trees. Street and park tree maintenance is handled by the City's Public Works Department. For general maintenance requests, please phone the City's Public Works Department at 310-544-5252 or make the request online at <https://user.govoutreach.com/ranchopalosverdesca/support.php?cmd=shell>

For view impairing city trees refer to View Restoration Division at 310-544-5288.

Foliage within the City's Nature Preserves- Although nature preserves are owned by the City, foliage management responsibilities are shared between the City's Public Works Department and Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. Generally, non-native trees impairing views could be trimmed, but native species of foliage cannot. For more information about the PVP Land Conservancy, please visit <https://pvplc.org/>

For view impairing non-native trees within a Preserve, located within the City of RPV's jurisdiction, refer to View Restoration Division at 310-544-5288.

Dead, dying, and diseased trees- Dead, dying and diseased trees, as determined by the city, are considered violations per Section 8.24.060 of the Rancho Palos Verdes Municipal Code. Please report these violations to the Code Enforcement Division by phoning 310-544-5281 or report online at <https://www.rpvca.gov/161/Code-Enforcement>

If the dead, dying or diseased tree is located on City property, then please phone the City's Public Works Department at 310-544-5252 or report it online at <https://user.govoutreach.com/ranchopalosverdesca/support.php?cmd=shell>

Trees owned by other entities or agencies - Within the boundaries of the City or RPV, trees could be found on properties owned by other governmental entities and agencies, i.e. Federal, County, School District and Library District properties. The city's regulatory authority varies here. In 1998, the Palos Verdes Peninsula School District, for example, which owns numerous, mature trees throughout its school system, invoked California Government Code Section 53094 rendering the City's View Ordinance inapplicable to its properties located within RPV. However, residents are encouraged to contact the District (or the school) to make tree work requests as the District or school may honor such requests as a "good neighbor policy".

In situations where view impairing trees are located within the Miraleste Recreation & Parks District land (map), these trees could be addressed by the Miraleste Recreation & Parks District. The District reviews and approves trimming requests on a case-by-case basis. You may contact the Miraleste Recreation & Parks District at 9 Miraleste Plaza, Rancho Palos Verdes CA 90275 or at <https://www.miralesterecreationandparkdistrict.com/contact>

In situations where view impairing trees are located within adjacent cities, the City's View Ordinance is inapplicable.

HOAs & Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's)- The city does not enforce CC&Rs. Please contact your HOA Board. However, view impairing trees that exceed 16 feet in height or roofline height of the closest structure owned by the HOA or its residents are subject to the City's View Ordinance review process.

Trees near or within Powerlines –Please contact Southern California Edison (SCE) at 800-655-4555 or visit their website: <https://www.sce.com/safety/power-lines> to report trees near or within SCE powerlines.

Powerlines and Power poles- The City's View Ordinance allows the city to review view impairments caused by trees and residential structures, but not powerlines or power poles. Powerlines and power poles are owned by SCE. Please direct your non-safety related questions about power poles and high voltage lines to SCE. Direct your questions concerning the lower cable lines to the local telephone or internet provider.

Birds and Bird Nests- To harm or harass a native bird or its nest is a violation of federal and state law. If you are considering trimming a tree or doing construction/demolition near a bird nest, then please assume that the nest is active, thus the nest must be protected pursuant to federal and state law. Consider hiring a biologist to inspect the nest before commencing your project or tree trimming (see attached flyer).

The city does not investigate bird nest activity or enforce bird and bird nest protection laws. If you observe a violation, please report the violation to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife office at 562- 598-1032 or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife service at 1- 844-397-8477.

Tree Species Protection - In California, some municipalities that have adopted laws that protect large-sized trees or certain species of native trees within their jurisdictional boundaries. The City of RPV has not adopted similar laws.

Solar Protection- In California, some municipalities that have adopted ordinances that mirror the state's Solar Shade Control Act, which was signed into law in 1978. The Act protects solar collector owners from the shade casted from neighboring trees. The City of RPV has not adopted a solar protection ordinance. Therefore, the city does not enforce the Act. Violations of the Solar Shade Control Act could be enforced by the solar collector owner in civil court. See Section 25982 of the California Public Resources Code.

Tree Ownership – The city does not have a staff surveyor available. Tree ownership disputes are considered civil matters that are often settled by obtaining a licensed land surveyor to conduct a boundary line survey if no prior survey exists. The city does not regulate these ownership disputes. The city does not have a list of surveyors for hire nor does the city recommend specific surveyors.

Overhanging Branches- If you own a tree with branches that overhang into your neighbor's property, your neighbor may feel compelled to trim back the branches without seeking your permission. The dispute that arises out of such trimming is considered a civil matter as the city does not regulate tree branches that overhang onto neighboring properties.

If you are a resident concerned about your neighbor's tree branches that encroaches over your property, please be cautious about the extent of the trimming because the trimming could cause injuries to the health, aesthetics, or functionality of the tree and you could be found civilly liable for these injuries. You may consider consulting with an attorney and/or tree arborist if there is an on-going dispute. In situations where there are no on-going disputes with the tree owner, providing the tree owner with a letter explaining your intent to hire a professional tree service to trim back the tree branches on a specific date and consulting with an arborist before trimming commences may help avoid friction between you and the tree owner and avoid tree damage due to trimming.

If you believe the encroaching branches are causing an imminent safety hazard, please contact the Code Enforcement Division by phoning 310-544-5281 or report online at <https://www.rpvca.gov/161/Code-Enforcement>

Trespassing - The city does not allow any resident permission to enter another resident's property or to trim or remove a tree that does not belong to him or her. To enter another resident's property with the intent to trim or remove a tree or other vegetation could be considered trespassing per California Penal Code Part 1, Title 14, Section 602.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=PEN&division=&title=14.&part=1.&chapter=&article=

Please report trespassing to the Lomita Sheriff Station at 310-539-1661. The city does not investigate nor enforce California Penal Code Section 602.

In addition to criminal charges, civil courts could order the tree owner to collect damages from the trespassing party. See California Civil Code Section 3346. Please consult with an attorney if you are seeking compensation for an injured tree.