

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for the care and management of trees on Borough property and in the municipal rights-of-way (ROW).

What is the municipal right-of-way?

A ROW, in general, is the strip of land located between the curb and the street. The real, factual right-of-way for each Borough street can be found on the Borough's tax maps located in the Clerk's Office at Borough Hall. To identify the ROW when there is no sidewalk present, we obtain the width of the ROW. The street is measured and the center is located.

Care and maintenance

The DPW is responsible for the care and maintenance of nearly 3,000 trees in the ROW and on Borough properties. Services are coordinated and performed by the following:

- in-house by our DPW staff
- municipal contractors (when the scope of work exceeds the DPW abilities or equipment)
- utility contractors (when scope of work involves clearance or removal around power lines)

What services are performed?

The following services are provided to Borough trees:

- health evaluations – is the tree healthy or in distress
- pruning of low-hanging or dead limbs over sidewalks and streets
- removal of dead or declining trees
- stump removal
- root grindings - when Borough tree roots lift sidewalks
- planting of trees in ROW on residential streets

What do I do when the sidewalk is lifting?

When sidewalk slabs are being lifted by a Borough tree, notify the DPW. The Borough contracts with a NJ Certified Tree Expert (CTE) who will come out and evaluate if a root grinding can be performed. The CTE will assess whether the tree can have the roots ground, without compromising the stability and overall health of the tree.

If the grinding can be performed, the homeowner is responsible for obtaining a mason for the concrete work. The mason will then coordinate with the Borough's contractor on a date the slabs will be removed, the roots will be ground and the concrete will be replaced.

If simple grinding of the roots cannot be performed due to the number of roots to be removed, or it will impact the overall health of the tree, the tree may be removed. The concrete work would then follow.

How do I get a tree?

The Borough annually applies for grant monies through the State and County. When these funds become available, the Borough, in coordination with the Shade Tree Advisory Committee (STAC), purchases trees for residential street plantings. If you are interested in having a tree planted when they are available, contact the DPW or print a request form and mail it in.

I don't want to wait; can I plant my own tree?

Homeowners **cannot** plant in the ROW without permission from the Borough. Planting in the ROW, if allowed by the Borough, requires the homeowner to have a signed waiver of liability and ensure that all utility mark-outs are completed prior to the excavation or ground breaking. Mark-outs are obtained free of charge by calling 811 or 1-800-279-1000. Mark-outs should be phoned in at least one week prior to the start of work. Tree species selection should be coordinated with the STAC to ensure it is a native planting that meets the Borough's Community Forestry Plan and at the same time provides a suitable planting based on the conditions in and around the ROW.

How do I contact the DPW regarding any of the above listed information?

Contact the DPW by calling (732) 247-9379 or e-mailing trees@hpboro.com, and provide us with the following information:

- name
- address
- phone number
- specific location of the tree or trees in question
- brief description of what service may be needed
- your interest in having a tree planted
- your interest in planting your own tree