

Street Trees and Your Rights as a Property Owner

Property owners have a critical role in the protection of Hamden's street trees. This document provides information and resources so property owners can act in an informed manner to insure a healthy tree canopy for Hamden's streets. Your rights vary depending on who wishes to work on a street tree.

If the Town of Hamden wants to prune or remove a street tree

- Decision to remove a tree is made by the Tree Warden – Anthony Greene – who also has the title of Superintendent of Trees. He is an employee of Hamden's Public Works Department.
- The tree **must be posted** by the Tree Warden and the posting notice must be dated.
- According to state law, any "person, firm or corporation" can object to the removal or pruning of a town tree (you **do not** have to be the abutting property owner).
 - Your objection must be in writing to the Tree Warden (e-mail counts)
 - A hearing will be scheduled by the Town Attorney's office
 - Tree Warden must render a decision within 3 days after the hearing
 - The Tree Warden's decision can be appealed

Send objections to:

Tree Warden, Town of Hamden
c/o Office of the Town Attorney
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518

If United Illuminating (Avangrid) wants to prune or remove a town (street) tree

- They need approval from Hamden's Tree Warden or Consulting Arborist and a permit from the Tree Warden
- They also need consent from the abutting property owner (within time limits – see below)

When a work planner from a UI contractor (***Asplundh, Lewis Tree, ACRT or another contractor***) contacts you to propose tree work, you have the right to:

- Object to the proposed work in its entirety
- Request a modification - make changes to the proposal, for example: changing their "ground to sky" pruning (in which they remove all the branches on the wire side of the tree) to directional pruning, (pruning as previously pruned) - pruning only around the wires
- Give consent to the work as proposed

If you wish to object or request a modification, it must be filed in writing (e-mail counts – trees@uinet.com and your Tree Warden crhone@hamden.com) not later than ten business days after you have been contacted by UI or their contractor.

- Should your objection or request for modification be rejected by the Tree Warden – **he must issue this in writing** - you have the option to appeal to PURA (Public Utilities Regulatory Authority) within ten days of the Tree Warden's decision (see reverse for information).
- If you object to the proposed tree removal or pruning, **the burden of proof is on UI**. They must prove the tree is a hazard and threatens their distribution network.

MORE INFORMATION

Contacts

Tree Warden, Town of Hamden
1125 Shepard Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518
Phone: (203) 287-2600
crhone@hamden.com

Hamden Tree Commission
c/o Mayor's Office
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518

Hamden Tree Commission Webpage
<https://www.hamden.com/376/Tree-Commission>
(includes Hamden's Tree Removal Policy)

To submit an objection or request for modification to United Illuminating
(applies to adjacent property owners only): trees@uinet.com

The Public Utility Regulatory Authority has required United Illuminating to establish a toll-free phone number for residents to use if they have questions about tree work.

The toll-free number for UI: 866-829-4461

To report issues/concerns with UI or their contractors, contact:

PURA (Public Utilities Regulatory Authority)
Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051
Phone: 860-827-1553 or pura.information@ct.gov

To submit comments on testimony related to UI vegetation management plans:
PURA.ExecutiveSecretary@ct.gov

Index to all CT Tree Laws
<http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/forestry/tableofcontentshyperlinked.pdf>

Chapter 283, Sec. 16-234 (issues dealing with utilities)

Conducting vegetation management; notice to abutting and private property owners. Objections or requests for modifications. Provision of vegetation management plan to town or borough.

Chapter 283, Sec. 23-59

Powers and duties of tree wardens

Public Act No. 14-151 (issues dealing with utilities)

An Act Concerning Tree Trimming

Reference Documents

State Vegetation Management Task Force Report
http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/forestry/vmtf/final_report/svmtf_final_report.pdf