

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT REMOVING TREES IN DEMAREST

Demarest residents recognize the environmental and aesthetic value of trees. Trees are also an important part of our stormwater mitigation plan because they soak up rainfall. Accordingly, guidelines issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection recommend having a tree removal ordinance in order for a town to be eligible for Stormwater Grants.

Chapter 163-Article 1 of the Demarest Code **prohibits the removal of trees, shrubs and plants located on public property or in the street right-of-way**. At its 6/26/23 meeting, the Council amended Chapter 163-Article 2, which now **requires a permit to remove any tree on private property with a trunk diameter of 4 inches or more**. These ordinances, administered by the Demarest Shade Tree Commission (STC) are posted on the website at Government/Borough Ordinances/Chapter 163 Trees. The application for a tree removal permit under Article 2 is available at Directory/Shade Tree Commission/Forms.

The ordinance requires that most trees being removed (other than dead or hazardous trees) be replaced with one or more new trees (the replacement requirement depends on the size of the tree(s) being removed). Removing a tree without a permit or without planting a required replacement is a violation of the ordinance, for which there is a fine of \$1250 plus \$625 for each replacement tree required but not planted.

December 2023 Update: The tree removal ordinance was amended to permit the option to make a donation to the Demarest Shade Tree Commission Trust Account in lieu of paying a fine. To choose this option, a donation of at least 80% of what the fine would have been must be submitted to STC Secretary at Borough Hall within 30 days after the issuance of the notice of violation. The STC will use the funds in the Trust Account to administer the ordinance and to plant, maintain, preserve or control trees, or to remove hazardous trees, in the Borough.

The STC is also working to identify Landmark Trees in Demarest, which the ordinance defines as being of a rare species or more than 100 years old, having an abnormal height or trunk or crown diameter for a tree of its species, or a location, shade value, fragrance, erosion control, aesthetic feature or scenic enhancement of special importance to Demarest. If you know of such a tree, please send an email with its location to Lee Campbell, STC Secretary, at lcampbell@demarestnj.gov.