

Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry

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This Tip provides information about the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) Tree Service Provider Registry and how to register your business.

All tree service providers are required to be registered to conduct commercial tree work in Seattle. Property owners are required to use registered tree service providers for commercial tree work.

SDCI's Tree Service Provider Registry is accessible to the public so that owners, residents, and neighbors can be assured a registered company knowledgeable with tree regulations and best practices is completing work in their neighborhood.

What is the SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry?

SDCI maintains a Tree Service Provider Registry (registry) of all companies eligible to conduct commercial tree work on private property in the City of Seattle. Commercial tree work is defined in the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 25.11.020 as any of the following actions conducted in the City of Seattle in exchange for financial compensation:

- Removal of trees larger than 6 inches in diameter at standard height (DSH)
- Reportable work: Reportable work is the removal of live branches 2 inches in diameter or greater, pruning or removal of live roots 2 inches in diameter or greater, or removal of live branches constituting 15 percent or more of a tree's foliage-bearing area.
- Consulting Services: The assessment of the health or hazard risk of trees larger than 6 inches DSH.

Normal pruning and maintenance that does not meet the definition of reportable work is not commercial tree work.

Please note the City of Seattle has different requirements for providers who may evaluate, care for, remove, and plant trees on private property versus in the public rights-of-way. The SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry covers work on private property and is different from the SDOT tree service provider registry that regulates work that occurs in the public rights-of-way. **You must register on each one separately;** links to each may be found at <https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/portal/Customization/pages/trees.aspx>.

To register with SDCI, tree service providers must have:

- A current City of Seattle Business License.
- A valid Washington State L&I General Contractor number.
- A current certificate of insurance with City of Seattle as the certificate holder with a minimum of \$1,000,000 in Commercial General Liability. The liability coverage must include an endorsement naming the City of Seattle as an additional insured on a primary and non-contributory basis for government authorization purposes.
- At least one International Society for Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist on staff or retainer. You will need to provide an ISA card for all ISA certified arborists listed on the application. (ISA's Trees Are Good site (<https://www.treesaregood.org/find-an-arborist>) is a good website to find a professional arborist and verify credentials.)
- The SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry is published on the SDCI trees and codes webpage ([www.seattle.gov/sdci/codes/codes-we-enforce-\(a-z\)/trees-and-codes](http://www.seattle.gov/sdci/codes/codes-we-enforce-(a-z)/trees-and-codes)). Tree service providers listed on the registry are committed to following the tree protection regulations found in [SMC 25.11](#) and related Director's Rules, and ANSI A-300 Standards (or subsequent standard). Receiving notices of violation for two separate incidents will prevent tree service providers from being eligible to conduct commercial tree work on private property in Seattle for one year. Unregistered providers are also ineligible to conduct commercial tree work in Seattle.

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Seattle Department of
Construction & Inspections

What are the responsibilities of a registered tree service provider?

All registered tree service providers are required to:

- Comply with public noticing requirements (See Tip 242D)
- Comply with best practices applicable to the particular commercial tree work they are conducting
- Attest to having knowledge of City codes applicable to commercial tree work
- For commercial vehicles used by the registered tree service provider, (1) clearly display the tree service provider’s City-issued registration number and (2) have the name of the business to which the vehicle is registered and the business’s phone number or email address permanently displayed on the left, right, and rear (where applicable) sides in letters no less than 2 inches in height.
- Renew the tree service provider registration annually

When do I need to hire a registered tree service provider?

Property owners must hire a registered tree service provider to complete commercial tree work on private property in Seattle.

Any company you hire must be registered to complete commercial tree work. For example, if tree removal is

part of a demolition contract, the company you hire to clear any trees over 6 inches DSH must be registered with SDCI.

Alternatively, if your project does not include commercial tree work, the company you hire does not need to be registered. For example, if your project is grinding an old stump, you do not need to hire a registered provider.

A list of active registered tree service providers can be found at [www.seattle.gov/sdci/codes/codes-we-enforce-\(a-z\)/trees-and-codes/Tree-Service-Provider-Directory](http://www.seattle.gov/sdci/codes/codes-we-enforce-(a-z)/trees-and-codes/Tree-Service-Provider-Directory).

What are the enforcement and penalties?

If registered tree service providers have been issued notices of violation two separate incidents, they will be removed from the SDCI public registry for one year. This includes notices for Tree Protection, SMC 25.11, and Regulations for Environmentally Critical Areas, SMC 25.09. In addition, the tree service provider will need to pay all applicable fees associated with the violations. Following the one-year removal period, the tree service provider may apply to be added back to the registry.

Violations of SMC 25.11.095 are subject to the fines and penalties as outlined in SMC 25.11.100 and Director’s Rule 8-2022 or successor rule.

How do I register my business?

Work Requiring a Registered Tree Service Provider

Type of work	Requires registered tree service provider?
Removal of tree larger than 6 inches DSH	Yes
Reportable Work	Yes
Removal of any hazard tree larger than 6 inches DSH	Yes
Reportable work on any hazard tree	Yes
Normal pruning and maintenance of any tree (i.e. not commercial tree work)	No
Removal of any tree larger than 6 inches DSH within an Environmentally Critical Area	Yes
Reportable work on any tree within an Environmentally Critical Area	Yes
Emergency work	No
Property owner doing any work on trees (i.e. not commercial tree work)	No
Assessment of health or hazard risk of tree larger than 6 inches DSH	Yes
Assessment of health or hazard risk of tree larger than 6 inches DSH within an Environmentally Critical Area	Yes

Tree Service Providers can register with the SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry through the Seattle Services Portal at <https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/portal/Customization/pages/trees.aspx>. If you do not already have a Seattle Services Portal account, you will need to create an account. Please note, this is a digital application; if you need assistance completing your application, please call us at (206) 233-5185 or contact us at sdci-trees@seattle.gov.

For assistance navigating the application process, please review the step-by-step instructions in How to Apply for the Tree Service Registry. The application process will take 15-20 minutes to complete.

You will need the following documents and information to complete the registration process. As noted below, you will be asked to upload digital documentation as part of the application process.

- **Current City of Seattle Business License.** You will need to upload a copy of your license. Tip! Go to FileLocal (<https://www.filelocal-wa.gov/Default/FileLocal.aspx>) to confirm that your license status is current before beginning the registration process.
- **Washington State L&I General Contractor number.** Tip! Go to WA L&I to confirm that your contractor registration is current before beginning the registration process.
- **Certificate of Insurance for General Liability insurance.** You will need to upload a copy of your general liability insurance and an endorsement listing the City of Seattle as an additional insured.
- **International Society for Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist** card for all arborists listed on the application. You will need to upload a copy of the ISA card. Please note that the card must include the credential holder's name, certification number, and expiration date.

How do I meet the insurance requirements?

All registered tree service providers are required to show proof of Commercial General Liability insurance coverage with a minimum of \$1,000,000 limit per occurrence and an additional insured endorsement. If your coverage expires within a year of registering with the SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry, your registration will be suspended until you submit proof of renewed coverage.

To provide proof of acceptable insurance coverage, you must submit two separate documents:

- Commercial General Liability policy certificate of insurance

- Insurance endorsement form naming the City of Seattle as an additional insured

Minimum Insurance Requirements

To help you obtain the acceptable documentation, please provide the following minimum insurance requirements to your insurance broker or agent.

- The Commercial General Liability policy must be written on an insurance industry standard form ISO CG 0001 or equivalent coverage form.
- The Commercial General Liability policy must have at least one million dollars (\$1,000,000) Each Occurrence Combined Single Limit Bodily Injury and Property Damage.
- The Commercial General Liability policy certificate should include:
 - The City of Seattle is "primary and non-contributory" additional insured.
 - The City of Seattle shall be given not less than thirty (30) days' notice of cancellation of the policy, except in the case of non-payment, then not less than ten (10) days' prior notice is required.
- The Commercial General Liability policy certificate holder should be identified as: **City of Seattle**, P.O. Box 94669 Seattle, WA 98124-4669
- The Commercial General Liability policy must include:
 - Premises Operations.
 - Products and Completed Operations.
 - Broad Form Property Damage Liability.
 - Personal Injury.
- Endorsement naming the City of Seattle as an additional insured for primary limits of liability. (See sample form at the end of this Tip.)
 - The City of Seattle must be an additional insured with a CG 2012 (0509 or newer version preferred) or CG 2026 additional insured endorsement or an appropriate blanket additional insured endorsement or ISO CG 2012 equivalent. The additional insured endorsement must reflect the City's role as a governmental entity issuing a permit or authorization. This excludes the CG 2009, CG 2010, and CG 2033 forms, because the permit applicant isn't performing any work for the City. It also excludes blanket additional insured wordings that refer to written agreements or contracts, because

permits and authorizations are not agreements or contracts.

In addition to the minimum General Commercial Liability insurance you are required to hold to be eligible for listing on the registry, it is good practice to also have Commercial Auto Liability insurance to cover accidents that may involve your commercial vehicles. If you have employees, it is good practice to carry Stop Gap or Employer's Liability coverage to cover your business from damages claimed during a worker's compensation suit.

Still need help?

Customers may contact the **Tree Provider Registry hotline** at (206) 233-5185 if they have questions and/or if they need interpretation services (please be prepared to share your preferred language to help us locate the appropriate support). You may also email us at SDCI-trees@seattle.gov or contact us through SDCI's Submit a Request form (https://sdci.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=1500003356822). To help route your request, indicate that you need help with "Permits, codes, zones, plans," then select "Land Use" as the type of help you need, and then select "Trees" in the description field. If necessary, we can set up a virtual meeting to discuss potential or actual projects.

Access to Information

Links to electronic versions of SDCI Tips, Director's Rules, and the Seattle Municipal Code are available on our website at www.seattle.gov/sdci.

Exhibit: Sample Insurance Endorsement Form

Use the PDF sample endorsement PDFs from the Art and Attachment folder.