

(b) *Preferred species list.* A preferred species list shall be prepared by the city, periodically revised, and distributed to the public upon request. This species list shall, to the greatest extent possible, represent plants that are:

- (1) Drought tolerant;
- (2) Adapted to cold weather;
- (3) Commercially available;
- (4) Native or naturalized;
- (5) Noninvasive and not destructive to native plants; and
- (6) Strong wooded, and not brittle.

(c) *Installation.* All landscaping shall be installed with sound workmanship and sound nursery practices in a manner that will encourage vigorous growth.

(d) *Root barriers.* The city shall require root barriers for trees planted within 15 feet of any road right-of-way, sidewalk, or utility. The intent of this requirement is to protect infrastructure, including sidewalks, from street trees shown on approved plans and from trees that are known to create root problems in South Florida. An applicant for a building permit may provide written justification to waive the requirement for root barriers. Such waivers shall be approved or denied administratively by the growth management department. Waivers that are denied may be appealed to the planning, zoning, and appeals board.

(Ord. No. 17-2000, § 168, 7-20-00; Ord. No. 17-2004, § 5, 6-3-04)

Sec. 78-328. Pruning.

The pruning standards in this article shall apply only to all nonresidential uses and to common areas in all planned developments and within developments of regional impact.

(a) *Crown reduction.* Crown reduction of shade trees shall be prohibited until the tree canopy has reached at least 15 feet in diameter, excluding the following:

- (1) To remove limbs or foliage presenting a hazard or in conflict with a crime prevention program;
- (2) To remove dead or diseased limbs;
- (3) To reinforce strength of form, or
- (4) In association with tree or palm relocation work.

After a tree canopy reaches 15 feet in diameter, crown reduction shall only be permitted as incidental when correct pruning standards are used and when there are constraints such as but not limited to power lines and structures.

- (b) *Plant characteristics.* Plant characteristics shall be reviewed during the approval process for landscape plans to prevent conflicts with building design, signage, utilities, and drainage. Unless otherwise approved by the city, trees shall be allowed to grow to a shape and size typical of their species throughout their life cycle.
- (c) *Pruning standards and requirements.* The following are general pruning standards and requirements established for the city.
- (1) *Hatracking.* Hatracking is prohibited. For the purposes of this article, hatracking is defined as one or more of the following actions:
 - a. Flat-cut the top or sides of a tree, severing the leader or leaders;
 - b. Make internodal cuts; prune a tree by stubbing off mature wood larger than three inches in diameter; or
 - c. Reduce a mature tree's total circumference or canopy spread by one-third or more.
 - (2) *Palm trees.* Pruning palm trees shall be limited to dead fronds and up to one-third of the green fronds and seed pods.
 - (3) *Maximum limb pruning.* Maximum limb pruning, or severely cutting back lower branches to increase sight visibility from underneath a tree's canopy, shall not exceed 13.5 feet from the ground level to the collar of the first limb.
- (d) *Alternative canopy shapes.* If other than the normal expected tree canopy shade and size is desired by the owner of the trees, the desired shape and size shall be indicated on the approved landscape plan. If a desired shape and size is not noted on the approved landscape plan, trees shall be allowed to grow to their natural shape and size. Landowners can request that their approved site plans be amended to allow tree shaping if any of the following conditions apply:
- (1) A tree or trees are located in a constraining situation, such as under power lines; or
 - (2) A tree or tree's unnatural shape is to be used as an accent or focal point in a landscape design, but not for the total landscape design. A maintenance commitment must be clearly outlined on the landscaping plan to explain the care and upkeep of unnaturally shaped trees.
- (e) *Performance.* Pruning shall be performed by a person or tree service that is knowledgeable with the latest standards of the National Arborist Association. Copies of these standards are included in the city's landscape handbook. All tree service companies shall obtain a city occupational license, or applicable countywide license.
- (f) *Violations.* Excessive pruning, such as hatracking, may be considered tree abuse and a code violation by the city's code enforcement board. Each tree hatracked shall be considered a clear and separate violation, with a maximum fine of \$250.00 for the first tree and a maximum fine of \$250.00 for each additional tree. If the city's code enforcement board has made a previous determination that a person has violated this

article, then such person may be charged with a repeat violation. A maximum fine of \$500.00 for the first tree and a maximum fine of \$500.00 for each additional tree shall be set by the city's code enforcement board for repeat violation of this article. In determining the correctness of particular tree pruning techniques, the city shall use the current edition of the "Pruning Standards for Shade Trees," published by the National Arbors Association, or any future national standard on shade tree pruning. Tree replacement may be required by the code enforcement board.

(Ord. No. 17-2000, § 169, 7-20-00)

Sec. 78-329. Maintenance.

(a) *Required.* All landscape areas shall be maintained on a regular basis, to include weeding, watering, fertilizing, pruning, mowing, edging, mulching, replacement of dead or missing landscaping, removal of prohibited plants, and other horticultural practices that are needed to keep landscaping in good condition, free from disease, insect pests, weeds, refuse, and debris. Landscape maintenance shall be carried out in a manner that will not disrupt, inconvenience or endanger any member of the public, or pedestrian, or motor vehicles. City recommendations for general maintenance specifications are contained in the City of Palm Beach Gardens Landscape Handbook.

(b) *Condition at installation.* Plants shall be alive and in good condition at the time of issuance of the certificate of occupancy. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to replace landscaping and maintain landscaping throughout the life of the project.

(c) *Irrigation.*

(1) *Standards.* All landscape areas, except those areas composed of existing native plant communities, shall provide an irrigation system plan. The irrigation system shall be designed and installed in accordance with the Florida Irrigation Society Standards and Specifications for Turf and Landscape Irrigation Systems, as amended from time to time. Irrigation systems shall be designed and maintained to obtain the following results:

- a. Eliminate the wasteful use of water;
- b. Eliminate staining of buildings, walks, walls and other site improvements including landscaping;
- c. Provide a minimum of 100 percent coverage, including the capability of applying water onto turf areas on a different saturation level than that used to irrigate shrub-planting beds; and
- d. Eliminate water overthrow onto nonpervious areas.

(2) *Irrigation plan.* An irrigation plan, unless otherwise provided herein, shall be required as part of an overall landscaping plan. The irrigation system plan shall be a minimum scale of one inch equals 30 feet.

(3) *Rain sensors.* A rain sensor, to switch off irrigation during wet periods, shall be required on all irrigation systems.