



TREE REMOVAL IN PROTECTED AREAS

STATE AND CITY STREAM BUFFERS

BACKGROUND: All waters of the State are protected by a 25-foot State stream buffer and a 50-foot City stream buffer, if they have wretched vegetation and flow of water. If a property owner is unsure if a stream or body of water is protected by a stream buffer please contact the Community Development Department's Land Development Manager, Tom Roberts, at 678-512-3284 to request a site visit to make a determination. Most retention ponds/lakes in the City of Johns Creek are not protected by stream buffers because they do not have flow of water that may wrest away the vegetation at the edge of the water.

The reason streams have buffers is two-fold:

- a. To protect the stream, or body of water from soil erosion by ensuring that trees and other vegetation are protected from removal and exposing the soil; and
- b. To shade the stream, or body of water from the heat of the sun.

In most of Georgia, our source of drinking water comes from our rain or stormwater that drains into our streams and rivers. For Johns Creek our primary source of water comes from the Chattahoochee River. The following streams and their tributaries drain into the Chattahoochee River: Johns Creek, Long Indian Creek, Cauley Creek, Big Creek, Crooked Creek and Level Creek. Keeping our streams and rivers protected and clean, ensures that we have potable water.

1. **REMOVAL OF DEAD, DISEASED AND INSECT-INFESTED TREES:** The removal of a dead, diseased or insect-infested tree from either the City's 50-foot stream buffer or the State's 25-foot stream buffer may be allowed, provided that an ISA Certified Arborist provides a written report to the City's Community Development Director providing the following information:
 - a. The location of the tree as shown on a site plan or aerial photograph;
 - b. Photos of the tree to be removed and close up photos of the dead tree or areas of the tree that are diseased or infested by insects;
 - c. A description of the tree;
 - d. A description of the disease or insects affecting the tree; and
 - e. If the tree is diseased or infested with insects, a reason, or reasons, why the diseased or insect-infested tree cannot be saved.



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- f. The report must be signed by the Arborist and the Arborist’s Certification Number must be provided.

- 2. **REMOVAL OF HEALTHY TREES:** Trees that are leaning, blocking views or otherwise not wanted, but are not dead, not diseased and not insect-infested, are considered healthy trees. **HEALTHY TREES CAN NOT BE REMOVED FROM ANY STREAM BUFFER.**

- c. **REPLANTING OF WRONGFULLY REMOVED TREES:** If a tree, or trees, are wrongfully removed from the State’s 25-foot stream buffer and/or the City’s 50-foot stream buffer, then the entity responsible for the removal of the tree(s) shall restore the area by planting native tree using the list of recommended trees below. Below is the list of recommended trees for restoration.

ACCEPTABLE EVERGREEN PLANT MATERIAL FOR STREAM BUFFERS

Cherry Laurel
Ligustrum (No Ligustrum sinense)
Eastern Red Cedar
Cleyera
Canadian Hemlock
Cryptomeria
Deodar Cedar
American Holly
Chinese Holly
English Holly
Longstalk Holly
Lusterleaf Holly
Perny Holly
Nellie R. Stevens Holly, (a cross between Chinese & English Hollies)
Tree-form Yaupon Holly
Hetzi Juniper
Pfitzer Juniper
Southern Magnolia
Wax Myrtle
Virginia Pine
Japanese Viburnum
Japanese Camellia

PLEASE ALLOW 30 DAYS FOR STAFF REVIEW AFTER RECIPT OF TREE REMOVAL REQUEST.