

Frequently Asked Questions

Trees, Fences, Sheds and Signs



Who to Contact

Municipal Trees and Chain-Link Fences around municipal property:

Municipal Chain-Link fences, along cat walks, woodlots and some park, may be City owned to find out more contact:

☎ 705-326-4585 ✉ mocop@orillia.ca

Fences surrounding properties not owned by the municipality such as schools, utilities and the County of Simcoe are not the responsibility of the City of Orillia.

Trees, Fences and Sheds on Private Property:

Fences previously constructed by developers adjacent to major roadways, such as Westridge Blvd. are now assumed by the private owners. These are not City fences.

☎ 705-325-2622 ✉ planning@orillia.ca

Dead, Decayed or Damaged Trees Creating an Unsafe Condition and the Tree is on Your Neighbour's Property or Tree Debris on Your Neighbour's Property:

✉ by-law@orillia.ca

Your complaint must be submitted in writing. If you don't have access to email, come to Orillia City Centre (50 Andrew St. S.) Complainant's information is kept confidential and will not be revealed to your neighbour.

General Inquiries: Building Division

☎ 705-329-7258 ✉ building@orillia.ca

General Inquiries: Planning Division

☎ 705-325-2622 ✉ planning@orillia.ca

Frequently Asked Questions

I have a lot of branches and debris on my property. What do I do with it?

Please place downed tree brush and branches on your front property, behind the sidewalk and off the roadway. Curbside brush pickup and wood chipping is ongoing by City crews for a limited time. Do not block sidewalks, roads, storm drains, fire hydrants, or hydro infrastructure. Please do not mix brush with other materials. Regular curbside set-out requirements for brush do not apply for this special pickup. Please do not place brush or wood in culverts. This can cause pooling and flooding. Residents may bring storm-related waste to the Waste Diversion Site at no cost until April 26.

My neighbour's tree is dead, decayed or damaged and is in an unsafe condition – what can the City do for me in this situation?

Yes, the City can assist in this situation. However, you must submit your complaint in writing. We cannot accept verbal complaints. Email your complaint to by-law@orillia.ca

If you don't have access to email, then you can file your complaint in-person at the Orillia City Centre (50 Andrew St. S.) by filling out the Complaint form. Complainant's information is kept confidential and will not be revealed to your neighbour.

Neighbouring properties have tree debris laying in their yard – what can the City do for me in this situation?

Yes, the City can assist in this situation. However, you must submit your complaint in writing. We cannot accept verbal complaints. Email your complaint to by-law@orillia.ca. If you don't have access to email, then you can file your complaint in-person at the Orillia City Centre at (50 Andrew St. S.) by filling out the Complaint form. Complainant's information is kept confidential and will not be revealed to your neighbour.

The park I visit has a lot of trees down. Should I tell someone?

City crews are addressing all City parks and trails as quickly as possible. Residents are asked to avoid parks and trails that have not yet been cleared of branches and debris.

A city tree fell on my property causing damage (to a house, car, other structures etc.). What do I do?

Property owners should contact their insurance company to commence a claim. The insurance adjustor will put the City on notice where applicable. Owners may submit a claim to the City using the **on-line Insurance Claim Form**. Owners should take photos of the trees/branches and all damage. City crews are circulating City streets and clearing hazardous and damaged trees and branches.

A tree from my neighbour's property has fallen onto my property and has caused damage or I need my neighbour to remove the tree. What do I do?

This is a private property matter. Contact your insurance company to see if you have coverage or a lawyer for them to advise you on next steps.

A city tree and/or branches fell on my property. Is the City going to clean it up and remove it?

City crews are clearing public property only and will not clear debris and brush from private property. Property owners are responsible to clean up their property.

A tree on my property is tangled or near hydro lines. What do I do?

Do not touch any debris tangle in or around hydro lines. Call Hydro One for service at 1-800-434-1235.

I haven't seen any City staff collecting branches in a while and there is a tree in front of my house in poor condition. Who should I call?

The storm response may last a few months. Once the response is over, if a Municipal tree still needs to be addressed, call the Operations Centre at 705-326-4585.



My shed has been damaged in the storm. What are the rules with respect to reconstructing my shed?

A shed or other Detached Structure that is under 15m²/161ft² does not require a Building Permit but must comply with the requirements of the Zoning By-law. Sheds under 15m²/161ft² must be set back at least 0.5m/1.6ft from a side property line and at least 0.5m/1.6ft from a rear property line. These setbacks are measured from the outside of the eave overhang of the shed. The maximum height of a shed is 5.0m/16.4ft measured to the mid-point of a sloped roof or to the top of a flat roof.

A shed or other Detached Structure (including a Detached Garage) over 15m²/161ft² does require a Building Permit. Please refer to the City's website for more information on Building Permits. Sheds larger than 15m²/161ft² must comply with the side yard requirement for the Zone (generally 1.2m/3.9ft in Residential Zones), must be set back at least 1.5m/4.9ft from a rear property line and cannot exceed 5m/16.4ft in height.

Sheds or other Detached Structures can be rebuilt in their same location provided they meet the Non-Complying provisions of the Zoning By-law. You are encouraged to consult with Planning staff at planning@orillia.ca or 705-352-2622 if you are considering altering the structure from its previous state.

A maximum of three (3) Accessory Structures (including sheds) is permitted on a residential property and that the maximum lot coverage cannot be exceeded (generally 45% in Residential Zones).

My sign has been damaged from the Ice Storm. Do I need a permit to get it fixed or replaced?

A damaged sign in need of professional repair may require a Building Permit. To make this determination, the City will require a Sign Permit submission. A Sign Permit application can be found here: orillia.ca/SignPermits

Sign Permits can be applied for in-person at the Building Division, Orillia City Centre (50 Andrew St. S.), 3rd Floor or through email to the Building Division at building@orillia.ca. Further to review, the Building Division will let you know if a Building Permit is required.

If a Building Permit is required, the Building Permit can be submitted through the Building Division web page located here: orillia.ca/en/living-here/buildingpermits.aspx#How-to-apply-for-a-Permit. Please click on the "Public Portal" link which will take you to the City's on-line Public Portal through which a Building Permit may be submitted. Building Permits can also be applied for in-person at the Building Department, Orillia City Centre (50 Andrew St. S.), 3rd Floor.



My fence has been damaged in the storm. What are the rules with respect to reconstructing my fence?

Fences not surrounding a swimming pool do not require a Building Permit from the City.

However, fences must comply with the City's Zoning By-law.

Unless the fence is City owned – fences are private property matters amongst abutting property owners.

Modifications to fences along shared property boundaries are to be decided amongst shared property owners and do not involve the City. The Line Fences Act does not apply in the City of Orillia.

If a dispute about a fence arises, this is a private property matter and owners must contact private legal assistance.

If a fence is located wholly within a lot's boundary that fence is that owner's responsibility, regardless of its use for mutual buffering (however discussions and negotiations between neighbours could still occur).

If a fence has sustained damage, and that damage has occurred from an adjacent property, then discussions amongst those two property owners must occur together with assistance from private insurance companies or from private legal assistance.

It is the responsibility of property owners to determine the property's boundary. A valid survey should be used to determine the location of the property line.

The City may have a copy of your property survey (however, we cannot guarantee that it is still valid) – Contact 705-329-7258 or building@orillia.ca to review files. The City does not provide survey assistance. If a survey is not available or to ensure that an existing survey is still accurate, an Ontario Land Surveyor should be retained to locate the property line.

Physical edges (edge of roadways, sidewalks, existing fences or hedges etc.) should never be used as a reference point to determine the start of a property line.

As such, it is important that the property owner carefully consider the specific location to install a fence. Assumptions between adjacent property owners as to where the property boundaries are, or the improper placement of a fence could result in conflict between property owners. The City does not intervene in such disputes. Where conflict does arise, the property owners would need to retain independent legal representation to resolve the dispute.

Once the property boundaries have been properly established, you may want to consider placing the fence within your property line to ensure no mistakes are made resulting in unintended encroachments onto an adjacent property. This may help avoid costly modifications if property lines are misjudged.

The maximum height is 2m (6ft 6in). This height excludes caps on top of posts provided they do not extend more than 0.2m (about 7.5in) above the top of the fence.

Special restrictions for fencing within a Sight Triangle - Please review Section 5.36 "Sight Triangles" of the City of Orillia's Zoning By-law 2014-44, as well as an illustration (Illustration A1.15 – Sight Triangles). If a fence is located in a Sight Triangle, the fence must be of open construction (you can see through it) or it must be 1m or less in height. Sight Triangles are 7.5m where streets intersect (see diagram below).

