

SOUTH RIDING TREECARE Approach

South Riding Proprietary and our Operations Team oversees more than 100,001 trees throughout the entire community. After a thunderstorm or windstorm, you'll find the Team immediately on the scene with their chainsaws assessing fallen limbs and trees on streets and in common areas. This article highlights the various tree scenarios we encounter throughout the year.



STREET TREES – Branches & Roots



SCENARIO: *I live in a town home and the branches and/or roots of the street tree are in my private property (homeowner yard).*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

The South Riding Proprietary's voluntary standard of maintenance for street trees as established at the discretion of the Board of Directors over the years includes: the annual mulching, elevating branches above the sidewalk to approximately 15' and any pruning of branches above the 15' mark that are making direct contact with the townhome.

You may complete "self-help" and cut any branches or roots that encroach into your private yard. Our arborists have assured us that it is okay to remove the surface roots and we routinely do so and the trees recover. Sewer line repair and water line replacement plans are available through NOVEC for a small monthly fee (visit novechomeprotection.com for additional information).

SCENARIO: *I live in a town home and the street tree roots are creating a tripping hazard next to our cluster mailbox.*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

The Proprietary Staff will evaluate the area and take proactive steps to eliminate the tripping hazard caused by the roots.



SCENARIO: *I live in a detached single-family home and the branches and/or roots of the street tree are in my private property (homeowner yard).*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

The South Riding Proprietary's voluntary standard of maintenance for street trees as established at the discretion of the Board of Directors over the years includes: the annual mulching, elevating branches above the sidewalk to 15' and the removal of any dead or damaged branch with a potential hazard of falling onto the sidewalk.

The street trees are located within the property boundaries of private property and homeowners are welcome to complete "self-help" and trim any healthy branches or roots that encroach into the private yard. Our arborists have assured us that it is okay to remove the surface roots and we routinely do so and the trees recover. Sewer line repair and water line replacement plans are available through NOVEC for a small monthly fee (visit novechomeprotection.com for additional information).





STREET TREES – Sick or hazardous street trees

SCENARIO: *I think the street tree in front of my home is dead, might be dying or is sick.*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

Concerns about the health of a street tree are reviewed on a case by case basis. Staff may take any of the following actions:

1. Consult with an Arborist to determine the health of the tree(s).
 - a. If the Arborist determination is that the tree is healthy no further action will be taken by the Proprietary. (The Arborist report is available upon request.)
 - b. If the Arborist determines the tree should be “watched”, it will be added to the existing Watchlist and monitored routinely.
 - c. If the Arborist determination is the tree(s) should be removed, please see #2 or #3 for expected action.
2. In clear-cut situations Staff will determine the tree is to be removed and schedule the work by our in-house Operations Team.
3. Typically, when a very large tree is to be removed the work is outsourced to an SR preferred vendor. In accordance with the SRP Procurement policy, proposals will be secured for review and approval by the General Manager and/or the Budget & Finance Committee. Once the proposal is signed the work will be scheduled for completion.



STREET TREES – and Replacement

SCENARIO: *The street tree in front of my house was removed, will it be replaced?*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

Street tree replacements are determined on a case by case basis. Staff analyzes the existing canopy of the street, considers utility easements and line of sight requirements in making their determinations.

If the street tree is not to be replaced Staff will later retrieve the stump, level the area and establish the area with grass seed. We respectfully ask property owners to assist the grass growth with regular watering.

Replacements are generally scheduled for October/November each year. We respectfully ask property owners to assist the health and growth of the tree with regular watering.

STREET TREE – *the trees which are planted in the strip of grass located between a sidewalk and curb. The street trees were an integral part of the developer’s design plan for South Riding.*

COMMON AREA TREES – Trees, Branches & Roots



SCENARIO: *The branches and/or roots of the common area tree are in my private property (homeowner yard).*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

Staff will address any reported damaged or hazardous limbs.



Regarding healthy branches, we defer to Virginia civil and property rights laws and according to these a property owner may complete “self-help” and trim any branches or roots that encroach into your property without intentionally harming the tree. Our arborists have assured us that it is okay to remove the surface roots and we routinely do so and the trees recover.

COMMON AREA TREES – Sick or hazardous



SCENARIO: *I think the common area tree near my home is dead, might be dying or is sick.*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

Concerns about the health of common area trees are reviewed on a case by case basis. It is the policy of the South Riding Proprietary to place downed trees, branches and stumps into the tree preserve and natural areas. They provide habitats and nesting places for wildlife, reduce soil erosion and aid new plant growth by returning important nutrients to the ecosystem.

COMMON AREA TREE – trees located in preserve and natural areas on property owned by the Proprietary.

Staff may take any of the following actions:

1. Consult with an Arborist to determine the health of the tree(s).
 - a. If the Arborist determination is that the tree is healthy no further action will be taken by the Proprietary. (The Arborist report is available upon request.)
 - b. If the Arborist determines the tree should be “watched”, it will be added to the existing Watchlist and monitored routinely.
 - c. If the Arborist determination is the tree(s) should be removed, please see #2 or #3 for expected action.
2. In clear-cut situations Staff will determine the tree is to be removed and schedule the work by our in-house Operations Team.
3. Typically, when a very large tree is to be removed the work is outsourced to an SRP preferred vendor. In accordance with the SRP Procurement policy, proposals will be secured for review and approval by the General Manager and/or the Budget & Finance Committee. Once the proposal is signed the work will be scheduled for completion.



COMMON AREA TREES – and Replacement

SCENARIO: *The common area tree near my home was cut down, will a new one be planted?*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

At the direction of the Board of Directors the Proprietary does not replace common area trees. The actual costs and potential long-term costs to the community are significant and with a goal of maintaining reasonable assessments

the Board believes this to be a fiscally responsible decision. Homeowners interested in replacing common area trees, especially in the wooded areas at their personal expense are welcome to contact Town Hall to discuss this further.

FALLEN TREES – with or without damage to private property

It is the policy of the South Riding Proprietary to place downed trees, branches and stumps into the tree preserve and natural areas. They provide habitats and nesting places for wildlife, reduce soil erosion and aids new plant growth by returning important nutrients to the ecosystem.

SCENARIO: *Tree fell into Grassy Common Area*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

The trunk and branches will be cut into pieces if needed for relocation into the adjacent wooded area.

SCENARIO: *Tree fell into Wooded Common Area*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

The trees will be fully downed and left in the natural area.

SCENARIO: *Tree fell into Private Property (no damage)*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

Staff will visit the property to assess the damage. Arrangements will be made as needed to address any damage to the portion of the tree remaining within the common area (outsourcing may be necessary for larger trees). South Riding Staff may not remove branches, limbs, etc. from within private property.

Homeowners should contact their insurance company and consider filing a claim for assistance with the removal of the tree, limbs and branches within your private property. Typically, this scenario falls under the act of nature clause under your home insurance policy.

SCENARIO: *Tree fell into Private Property and damaged a home or accessory component like a fence*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

Once a tree falls damaging a fence or property, the burden of repair falls to that property owner and a claim should be filed with their home insurance.

Staff will certainly visit the property to assess the damage. Arrangements will be made if needed to address any damage to the common

area (outsourcing may be necessary for larger trees). South Riding Staff may not remove branches, limbs, etc. from within private property.

Homeowners should contact their insurance company and file a claim. Typically, this scenario falls under the act of nature clause under your home insurance policy.

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR – Branches & Roots

SCENARIO: *The branches and/or roots of my neighbor's tree are in my private property (homeowner yard).*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

We highly recommend speaking with your neighbor directly about this, honestly and pleasantly. There is nothing that speaks specifically to this in our governing documents. We defer to Virginia civil and property rights laws

and according to these a property owner may complete “self-help” and trim any branches or roots that encroach into your property without trespassing onto the neighboring property and without intentionally harming the tree.

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR – Fallen Trees

SCENARIO: *My neighbor's tree fell into my private property (homeowner yard).*

SR POLICY EXPLANATION

We highly recommend speaking with your neighbor directly about this, honestly and pleasantly. You may also wish to reach out to your insurance company for advice and assistance with the removal of the tree, limbs

and branches within your private property. Homeowners should contact their insurance company and file a claim. Typically, this scenario falls under the act of nature clause under your home insurance policy.