

**VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD  
FREQUENT CITIZEN INQUIRIES REGARDING TREES/PARKWAYS**

- 1) My neighbor's tree hangs over my property line. Whose responsibility is it to trim? My neighbor refuses to.**

Trees as they grow and develop are not aware of the property lines. If a tree has grown over the property line, the responsibility to trim belongs to whoever's property the tree hangs over. In other words, if a tree extends over two properties each property owner is responsible to trim that portion of the tree that extends over his property. Proper pruning techniques must be used. Limbs that extend over onto your property do not automatically warrant removal if the overhanging limb is not causing any interference. It, therefore, should be left alone. Sound forestry practices that relate to proper trimming of trees must be followed. Sever trimming which damages the health of the trees is not allowed.

- 2) My neighbor's tree hangs over my property line and is a nuisance. I am tired of raking leaves, worrying about branches falling on my house, etc. and want this tree to be removed. How can I force my neighbor to remove this tree?**

First, you can remove branches that extend onto your property, provided that the removal of these limbs would not adversely affect the condition or shape of this tree. To force your neighbor to remove a tree they do not want to remove would require that the tree be in a condition that would be considered hazardous and dangerous. You would need to contact your attorney so they could take the appropriate legal action.

- 3) In a recent storm, a large branch of my neighbor's tree fell into my yard and is lying across the fence. Whose responsibility is it to remove this limb?**

Both neighbors working together on their own respective properties.

- 4) My neighbor recently planted several young trees close to my property line. As these trees grow, their branches will hang over my roof, leaves will get in my gutters, roots will get in my sewer line and damage my foundation, etc. The Village advises me there is no ordinance governing placement of such trees. What can I do?**

Discuss the matter with your neighbor, pointing out the possible future problems that the trees may cause.

- 5) I received a letter telling me to remove a dead tree in my front yard. However, this tree is mostly on my neighbor's property and not mine. I think it is his responsibility to have it removed. What can I do?**

Check your plat of survey to determine exactly whose property the tree is located on. Discuss with your neighbor to see if they concur. Notify the Village if the tree is not located on your property. If the tree is located partly on your property, share the cost of the removal with the adjacent property owner.

- 6) One of my private property trees has grown up into the utility wires. I have called Commonwealth Edison but they say they will get to it when they can. I am afraid this is a very dangerous situation. Can't the Village do something about this?**

No. The responsibility for trimming trees growing into and around the utility wires is that of Commonwealth Edison Company. Call 1-800-EDISON-1.

- 7) **We received a letter to have the dead tree in our back yard removed. However, this tree is in the easement. Is it the Village's responsibility to come and remove it?**

An easement gives the right to utility companies to enter upon private property to maintain their utilities. It is not the Village's responsibility to maintain or remove trees that are growing in an easement. The Village can only remove or maintain trees growing on public property belonging to the Village.

- 8) **The Village's parkway tree constantly interferes with my sewer line and I have spent a great deal of money rodding and ridding the line of tree roots. I want the tree removed (by the Village) but the Village refuses. What can I do?**

Village policy does not permit the removal of parkway trees for this reason. Placing root-killing chemicals in your sewer line on a regular basis can control root growth in the sewer. These chemicals are available from your local hardware store. Roots from trees will not gain access into a sewer pipe unless there is an opening in the pipe. When roots are in the sewer pipe, the pipe may need to be replaced. Sewer pipes are constructed of new materials such as plastic or concrete. These pipes are more desirable, and roots are less likely to enter these kinds of pipes.