

FORT HOOD TREE CARE ORDINANCE

PURPOSE: To establish a Tree Board, define the duties of the Board, and establish standards necessary to ensure that Fort Hood will continue to realize the benefits provided by its urban trees. Trees are important in our community because they enhance urban environments by providing shade, beauty, and wind protection. They also protect the soil, muffle noises, filter air, and provide screen between buildings. Large healthy trees are attractive and desired in our community.

PRINCIPALS.

1. A Tree Board is hereby created and established for Fort Hood. The purpose of the Board is to provide the preservation, protection, replacement, proper planting, and proper maintenance of trees located within the cantonment areas of Fort Hood.

a. The Tree Board will be comprised of representatives of organizations who are responsible for the care of trees on Fort Hood. The initial composition of the Tree Board includes DPW Environmental Division (Natural Resources Management Branch), DPW Maintenance Division (Roads and Grounds), DPW Services Division, III Corps and Fort Hood Environmental Law Attorney, Fort Hood Family Housing, the Courses of Clear Creek, Belton Lake Outdoor Recreation Area, the Sportsmen's Center, Killeen ISD (campuses located on Fort Hood), and Central Texas College (campus located on Fort Hood).

b. The Installation Agronomist will serve as the Chairman of the Tree Board.

c. The responsibilities of the Chairman of the Tree Board are to conduct the meetings of the Tree Board, keep the Board members informed, and to request input from the Board members.

d. The responsibilities of the Board members are to attend the Board meetings, to represent the position of their organization to the Board, and to represent the decisions of the Board back to their organization.

e. The Tree Board will meet twice annually, or as frequently as needed. Only the Chairman of the Tree Board may schedule meetings. Board members may submit a request to the Chairman to call a meeting.

f. Decisions of the Tree Board will be made by a consensus vote.

g. Most business of the Tree Board should be conducted through e-mail. This includes voting on business items during times between Board meetings.

2. This ordinance applies to all trees located within the cantonment areas of Fort Hood

3. Definition: A tree is defined as a woody plant that is at least 6 feet tall and has a single main trunk.

4. Tree preservation, protection, and replacement:

a. No person shall intentionally damage, cut, carve, paint, abuse, poison, or harm any tree or injure the bark of any tree located within the cantonment areas of Fort Hood

b. Live tree removal and replacement policy: All native hardwood trees should be preserved and protected. If removal of a live hardwood tree becomes necessary, each tree that is removed must be replaced at a ratio of ten new trees for each tree removed (10:1 ratio). Preservation of trees is preferred over replacement.

c. Any request for waiver of the replacement policy must be presented in writing to the Chairman of the Tree Board. This written request must include the reason for requesting the waiver. It will then be submitted to the Tree Board for vote, and will only be approved if a majority affirmative vote is received.

d. Dead or diseased trees that are a hazard to life or property should be removed and should be replaced at a ratio of one new tree for each tree removed.

e. New tree plantings (including replacements): Species of trees must be selected from the species listed in Appendix N of the Installation Design Guide (Plan Palette) or in the Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) – Landscaping Unit Areas, dated May 2004.

5. Tree planting guidelines:

a. Locate and mark proposed planting sites and apply for an approved excavation permit (FH 200-X10). A permit is required prior to any digging on Fort Hood and necessary to prevent damage to the underground utility systems.

b. Select the right trees for the right locations. Consider the size that the tree may reach at maturity, and any overlap of sidewalks, drives, buildings, streets, and overhead utility lines. Trees should not be planted within 10 feet of any buildings or structure, within 10 feet of any overhead utility line, or within five feet of any underground water or sewer line.

c. Dig holes so that the hole is two to three times the diameter of the container and no deeper than the container. Keep all original topsoil for backfilling. Plant only as deep as the level of the dirt in the original pot; planting too deeply may kill the tree.

d. Always handle trees by the container or the rootball, never by the stems, as this may damage the tree. If the tree is root-bound, make two cuts across the bottom layer of roots and several cuts along the sides to stimulate new root growth.

e. Set the tree in the hole and remove the container or the burlap and wire. Backfill only with the original soil. Do not backfill with compost, peat moss, or other materials. Add one third of backfill soil at a time, tamp lightly and use slow-running water to settle the soil and help secure the tree. Repeat this process of adding one third of backfill soil at a time and settling with water three times.

f. Place a 3- to 4-inch-thick layer of mulch around all trees to keep them free of weeds and grass. Use only shredded hardwood mulch, hardwood chips, or cedar mulch. Pine bark mulch is not recommended because it is easily washed or blown away. Do not use any type of rock or plastics instead of mulch because these will not provide any organic nutrients to the soil.

g. Do not use tree stakes or guy wires unless absolutely necessary for support. These actually weaken trees and are detrimental to proper trunk development.

h. Do not wrap any material around the base of the trunk. These encourage problems with insects and diseases and cause the bark to become weak.

i. Do not prune trees at planting time. It is not necessary because newly-planted trees need lots of foliage to build their root system. Damaged or diseased limbs may be pruned at planting time.

j. Trees will need to be watered until they are established (1 to 2 years). Water trees once per week during the summer months and every other week during the fall, winter, and spring months. Watering is not needed during times of sufficient rainfall (one inch or more of rainfall during the previous week is sufficient to not need watering).

6. Tree maintenance and care provisions:

a. All tree care that occurs will follow the American National Standard for Tree Care Operations – Standard Practices for Pruning, available from American National Standards Institute (www.ansi.org).

b. For pruning and trimming of trees, do not make flush cuts; only collar cuts are allowed. Flush cuts are cuts that are made flush against the tree trunk or limbs; these cuts severely damage trees by removing the branch collar. A collar cut is defined as a cut that leaves the branch collar intact. If the collar is left in place, the tree can heal properly, preventing rot and insect attack.

c. Special provision for oak trees: It is required that all pruning and trimming cuts on all species of oak trees be sprayed with wound paint immediately after each cut is made (spray within 10 seconds after cut is made) in order to help prevent the spread of oak wilt disease.

d. Trees should not be topped. Topping is defined as the severe cutting of limbs within the tree canopy to stubs, such that the normal canopy is removed and the tree

is disfigured. Topping results in rotting of branches, insect infestations, rapid growth of weak branches, and often, death of the tree. Trees that are exempt from this provision include trees severely damaged by storms and trees under utility wires or other obstructions where normal pruning is impractical.



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