

## ***Tree Removal Rules in Stratford – What You Need to Know***

### ***A Simple Guide for Residents — Required by the State of New Jersey***

The Borough of Stratford is now **required by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)** to adopt and enforce local rules that protect trees, reduce flooding, and improve environmental health. Ordinance 24-04 was created to meet these **state-mandated requirements** and to help Stratford maintain a safe, healthy tree canopy.

This one-page guide explains what residents need to know.

**Why is Stratford enforcing this?** Because the State of New Jersey now mandates it. NJDEP requires ALL municipalities to:

- Track tree removals
- Prevent unnecessary loss of mature trees
- Reduce stormwater runoff and soil erosion
- Protect public safety from hazardous trees
- Maintain long-term environmental resilience

Stratford must comply with these state standards — this is not optional for the Borough.

**When Do I Need a Permit?** You need a permit if you plan to remove:

- Any street tree (trees in the curb strip, planting strip, or public right-of-way) 2.5 inches DBH or larger
- Any tree on private property that is 6 inches DBH or larger

(DBH = diameter measured 4.5 feet above the ground)- These thresholds come directly from Stratford's ordinance, which was created to meet NJDEP's requirements.

**When Is a Permit *Not* Required?** You may be exempt if:

- You remove fewer than 4 trees per acre within 5 years (smaller size categories only)
- The tree is a hazard tree (dead, dying, diseased, damaging structures, or blocking visibility)
- The removal is part of an NJDEP/EPA cleanup or forest stewardship plan

Hazard trees still require documentation, but no replacement trees are required.

**Who Is Allowed to Do the Work?** New Jersey law requires that all commercial tree work be performed by a:

- Licensed Tree Expert (LTE) or
- Licensed Tree Care Operator (LTCO)

This is a state licensing requirement, not a Borough rule.

**Will I Need to Plant New Trees?** Possibly. If the tree is not exempt, Stratford must follow NJDEP-aligned replacement standards:

- 1–4 replacement trees depending on the size of the tree removed
- Minimum 1.5-inch caliper
- Must be from Stratford's approved species list
- Must be planted within 12 months
- Must survive for 2 years

If you cannot plant on your property, the Borough may assign an alternate planting location.

**What Do I Submit?**

1. A simple permit application
2. Photos of the tree(s)
3. A sketch showing tree locations
4. LTE/LTCO hazard assessment (if claiming hazard)
5. Replacement plan (if required)

**What Happens If I Remove a Tree Without a Permit?** Because Stratford is required to enforce this ordinance, violations may result in:

- A warning notice
- A \$50 fine
- Required replacement trees

#### ***We Are Here to Help!***

Stratford understands that these rules are newer and come from state level environmental mandates. Our goal is to make compliance simple, fair, and resident friendly while meeting NJDEP requirements.

# Borough of Stratford – Tree Removal Permit Application

<b>THIS BOX IS FOR BOROUGH USE ONLY</b> PERMIT APPPLCATION # _____ DATE RECEIVED: _____
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## 1. Applicant Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Premises Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Block/Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Contractor (If Applicable – Required for Commercial Work)

Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
 LTE/LTCE  
 License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Attached:     Yes             No

## 3. Trees Proposed for Remova

#	Species	DBH	Street Tree/Property	Hazard?	Reason
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

(Attach photos and simple sketch)

## 4. Exemption Check Applicant claims exemption under:

- Fewer than 4 trees per acre in 5 years
- Hazard tree
- NJDEP/EPA plan
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Replacement Requirement (If Applicable)

Total replacement trees required: \_\_\_\_\_ Species: \_\_\_\_\_

Planting location:     On-site             Borough-approved alternate Planting location: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Applicant Certification

I certify the information is true and all work will comply with Ordinance 24-04 and NJ LTE/LTCO requirements.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Findings:**

**Administrator/Clerk Review Completed:**

Yes – Date: \_\_\_\_\_

No

Notes:

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**Final Determination**

APPROVED – Permit Issued

DENIED – Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

PENDING – Additional documentation required

**Permit Issuance**

Permit Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

Issued By (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Post-Removal Compliance**

Replacement Trees Verified (within 12 months):

Yes      LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

No

Notice Sent Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Two-Year Survival Check**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Passed

Replant Required – Notice Sent

Final Compliance Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_