

12.000 RIGHT OF WAY VEGETATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

12.001 General

The following policy is established to manage vegetation on SFPUC property that poses a threat or hazard to the system's integrity and infrastructure.

The existence of large woody vegetation (which includes all brush, trees and ornamental shrubs species planted or naturally occurring that has a woody stem that exceeds three inches), hereinafter referred to as vegetation, and water/sewer transmission lines and other facilities are not compatible and in fact are mutually exclusive uses of the same space. Our experience has shown that roots can destroy transmission pipes by causing corrosion to the outer casements. It has also been our experience that the existence of trees and other vegetation directly adjacent to pipe lines, electrical transmission lines and other critical facilities makes emergency and annual maintenance very difficult, hazardous and expensive. The fire danger within the rights of way, reservoirs, pump stations, and storage tanks is always a concern and the SFPUC must comply with local fire ordinances. The reduction of fire ladder fuels within these corridors is another reason to modify the vegetation mosaic. In order to properly maintain these properties, facilities, water/sewer transmission lines, that serve 2.3 million customers in the South Bay, Peninsula, and San Francisco areas, the existing vegetation must be identified, addressed, and managed in an appropriate and timely manner to prevent any potential disruption in service or serious threat to the public.

Vegetation management practices include the use of mechanical, physical, cultural and biological means. The use of chemicals is the last vegetation management choice. If chemicals are chosen, only those chemicals approved by the Office of the Environment will be used.

12.002 Vegetation Management

Vegetation of any size or species will not be allowed to grow within certain portions of the rights of way or near sewer pump stations and critical facilities and infrastructure, as determined by SFPUC staff, generally in accordance with the following guidelines.

- 1. Emergency Removal**

All trees and vegetation posing an imminent hazard to water/sewer facilities, reservoirs, transmission lines such as fire suppression, native habitat preservation, or posing a potential for disease transmission shall be mitigated. In cases of emergencies where vegetation threatens the public,

City employees or property, the vegetation may be removed without prior public notification.

2. Priority Removal

If vegetation and trees along the rights of way is grouped in contiguous stands, or populations, a systematic and staggered removal of that vegetation will be undertaken to replicate natural appearances. Tree removal shall recognize wildlife habitat such as birds or rare forms of plants. In some instances coordination with SPEAC should take place prior to removal. Initial removal will be vegetation immediately above or within 15 feet of the pipeline. Secondary vegetation to be removed will be that which is 15 to 25 feet from the centerline of the pipes.

Vegetation and trees that are within 25 feet of center line of an underground pipe will be cut down, bucked up into short lengths and chipped whenever possible. Chips will be spread upon the site where the vegetation was removed. Material that can not be chipped will be hauled away to a proper disposal site.

3. Regular Maintenance Removal

Vegetation or trees that are more than 25 feet from the center line of a pipe and up to the boundary of the right of way will be assessed by SFPUC staff on its age and condition, fire risk, potential impact to the pipe lines and transmission lines or facilities, and will be removed in a like manner as stated above. Additionally, for intercity property, the San Francisco Fire Department requires that all vegetation and trees be kept clear within 30 feet of a structure and 8 feet in height. This reduces any ladder fire load due to low branches in trees or brush, or shrubs species.

All stems of vegetation will be cut flush with the ground, and where deemed necessary or appropriate, roots will be removed. All trees identified for removal will be clearly marked with paint and posted in accordance with local regulations.

Sprouting species of vegetation will be treated with herbicides where practicable and in compliance with policies and procedures.

Erosion control measures, where needed, will be completed before the work crew or contractor leaves the work site. SFPUC personnel will remove in a timely manner any and all material that has been cut for maintenance purposes within any

stream channel. All vegetation removal work and consultation on vegetation retention will always be reviewed and supervised by SFPUC staff.

12.003 Notification

Notification process for areas of significant resource impact that are beyond regular and ongoing maintenance:

1. County/City Notification – When appropriate, the Operating Divisions will send to the county/city a map showing the sections of the rights-of-way which will be worked, a written description of the work to be done, the approximate removal time for the work crews, and a contact person for more information. This will be done approximately 10 days prior to start of work.
2. Public Notification – Notices posted at areas where the vegetation is to be removed with the same information as above also approximately 10 days prior to removal. Posted notices will be 11" by 17" in size on colored paper and will be put up at each end of the project area and at cross over points through the right-of-way.

Questions and complaints from the public will be handled through a designated SFPUC contact person.

12.004 Annual Grass and Weed Management

Annual grasses and weeds will be mowed, disced, sprayed or mulched along the rights-of-way as appropriate to reduce the fire danger annually. If conditions allow treatment will be completed before July 30th of each year. This date is targeted to allow the grasses, forage and weeds to reach maturity and facilitate control for the season.

12.005 Segments of Right-of-Way that are covered by Agricultural deed rights

The only vegetation that will be allowed to be planted within the right of way on those segments where an adjacent neighbor has Deeded Agricultural Rights will be: non woody herbaceous plants such as grasses, flowers, bulbs, or vegetables.

12.006 Segments of Right-of-Way that are managed and maintained on a Leased or Permit basis

Special allowance may be made for these type of areas as the vegetation will be managed and not allowed to grow unchecked. When landscape plants are allowed to be planted in these designed areas they should have a limited life span of 10 years or less and then be replaced. Only shallow rooted plants will be allowed to be planted directly above the pipes and other plants that could possibly have an impact on the pipes must be at least 15 feet from the edge of any pipeline.

Within the above segments the cost of vegetation maintenance and removal will be born by the permittee or tenant exclusively and as directed by the SFPUC when encroachments are discovered.

The following is a suggested list of drought tolerant plants and shrubs that may be permitted to be used as landscaping materials:

Listing of Plants that may be permitted to be planted directly above existing and future pipelines:

Lily	Santa Barbara Daisy	Blue Oat Grass	Fountain Grass
Pennstemon	Shrub Rose	Mexican Sage	Trumpet Vine
English Ivy	Daylilies	Periwinkle	Fortnight Lily
Yarrow	Agapanthus	Sea Pink	Bergenia
Rock Rose	Erigeron	Wallflower	Blue Fescue
Gaillardia	Gaura	Gazania	Cranesbill
Ice Plants	Iris	Lantana	Lavendar
Sea Statice	Monkeyflower	Primrose	Poppy
Sage	Santolina	Germander	

Listing of Shrubs that may be permitted to be planted 15 feet from edge of existing and future pipelines:

Manzanita	Strawberry Tree	Barberry	Bush Anemone
Ceanothus	Australian Fuschia	Cotoneaster	Escallonia
Pineapple Guava	Garrya	Grevillea	Toyon
Australian Tea Tree	Mahonia	Pacific Wax Myrtle	Dwarf Olive
Pittosporum	Catalina Cherry	Hollyleaf Cherry	Coffeeberry
Indian Hawthorn	Sugar Bush	Currant	Rosemary

Sarcococca
Oleander

Aust. Blue Creeper Westringia
cultivars of each species

Xylosma

Other species will be considered on a case by case basis as submitted by the public. In all instances xeroiscape landscaping is encouraged.

12.007 Trees on the Right-of-Way

Trees will not be permitted to be planted directly into the native surface of any portion of the right of way. Trees of any species will be allowed to be planted and placed anywhere within the permitted area provided they are in containers and are above ground.

The above policy is for general application and for internal administration purposes only and may not be relied upon by any third party for any reason whatsoever. The SFPUC reserves the right at its sole discretion, to establish stricter policies in any particular situation and to revise and update the above policy at any time.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF INTENT TO REMOVE VEGETATION

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), _____ Division plans to modify the vegetation along this portion of its right of way. It is planned that some trees and brush will be removed above and within ___ feet of the transmission lines at this time.

The SFPUC is responsible for the delivery of potable water to some 2.3 million customers in the South Bay, Peninsula, and City of San Francisco, the water transmission lines which run through Bay Area counties and cities are the main arteries of our system. The SFPUC is also responsible for the San Francisco Clean Water Program. Any element which would contribute to an interruption of water or sewer service or hamper prompt repairs to any of these utilities would be irresponsible on the part of a public utility. The trees and brush that are growing either on top or directly adjacent to these lines fall into the category of negligence on our part if delays in repair time were to occur due to their presence. We are mandated to supply a continuous flow of water and uninterrupted sewer service to our customers and this requires continual maintenance of the delivery systems.

The <appropriate agency> has been advised of this project and is aware of our management program for our rights of ways.

1. **Project Owner:** (Appropriate Division)
2. **Location of the Project:** (See Map for more information)
3. **Purpose of Project:** Reduction of hazardous fuels for fire protection and preventative maintenance to reduce impact of roots on the water/sewer transmission lines.
4. **Schedule:** The tree removal operation will begin on _____ and continue for _____ working days from <Date> _____.
5. **Work Hours:** 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Questions regarding this project can be directed to the following office:

(List address and phone number of appropriate Division or Bureau)