



**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER**

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# MEMO

**DATE: AUGUST 13, 2020**

**FILE: 8365.01**

**ATTENTION: ALL ARBORISTS AND LANDSCAPERS**

**FROM: RMOW ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT**

**RE: LANDSCAPE MODIFICATION REPORT TEMPLATE FOR:**

- **TREE CUTTING PERMIT APPLICATIONS, AND**
- **DEVELOPMENT PERMITS FOR LANDSCAPE ALTERATIONS**

The RMOW standardized its requirements for Landscape Modification Reports based on a FireSmart Assessment requested for wildfire fuel reduction projects that require tree cutting permits or Landscape Alterations Development Permits. To ensure all the required information is included, the report will include the following information:

Prepared for: <address>  
Agent/Representative: <name and number>  
Prepared by: <insert name, company, address, phone number, and email>  
Site visit(s) : <date>  
Site Location: <address>  
Date report prepared: <date>  
Credentials of Arborist: <name & certification number>  
Planned completion date of work: <predicted date>

The report must include a synopsis, a detailed assessment of tree health, rationale for the proposed tree removals, and recommendations/prescription for each tree or the stand/s cited for removal. Include a diagram of where each tree proposed for removal is located on the lot in relation to the property lines. Where a small number of trees are planned for removal ( $\leq 20$ ), please flag and provide photos of the trees/stand. Additionally, the report must be created or reviewed and signed by a certified arborist, landscape architect or similar professional.

A pre-work and completion site visit will be conducted by either the RMOW FireSmart Coordinator or the Environmental Coordinator. Contact the Environmental Stewardship department to schedule a site visit: [hberesford@whistler.ca](mailto:hberesford@whistler.ca) or 604-935-8374.

Recommendations and plans will be reviewed against how the following criteria are addressed:

- How the Landscape Modification Report is aligned with and implements the recommendations of the FireSmart Assessment (FSA) prepared by the FireSmart Coordinator.



- A Wildlife Tree Assessment and a Danger Tree Assessment will be completed by arborist within 2 weeks of submitting the report for RMOW review. These assessments should identify danger trees for removal while retaining high value wildlife trees as much as possible.
- Tree removal and fuel thinning should prioritize the area within 10m of structure to provide a fuel free zone around perimeter of building (Priority Zone 1);
- Fuels in Priority Zones 2 (10 – 30 m) and 3 (30 – 100 m) should primarily be reduced through pruning and removal of dead branches and dead trees so that combustion cannot be supported;
- Crown continuity should be reduced to a target of 40% crown closure to reduce the risk of crown fire spread;
- Ladder fuels on mature trees should be removed to prevent candling;
- Healthy trees of various species and ages, including dominant and codominant canopy trees, as well as understory plants will be retained to maximize forest health and preserve its character. Retained trees will be free of diseases that could result in imminent mortality;
- No cutting of live deciduous trees or shrubs should occur as these help to reduce fire behaviour, and provide wildlife habitat;
- Western yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) will be retained where possible, and only where retention does not result in clumps larger than 3m in width;
- All retained trees larger than 3m should be pruned to a minimum of 2m to the lowest reaching part of the branch (usually the tip). No more than 40% of any tree will be removed. Cuts will be to the branch collar and branch stubs will be <1 cm long;
- Where dead branches are attached to logs or to trees greater than 17 centimeters wide, they should be trimmed to the trunk of the tree or log, and in the case of trees, to a height of 2 metres;
- Stumps will be a maximum of 10cm height from ground, with an angle of less than 10 degrees;
- Coarse woody debris (CWD) >20cm in diameter and minimum 10m in length may be left behind and should follow ground contours as closely as possible. Maximum number left equivalent to no more than 50 pieces per hectare;
- Medium and fine fuels will be largely removed from the site to reduce the risk and behaviour of surface fire. Small amounts (1.0 kg/m<sup>2</sup> for example) may be left behind;
- Chips spread on site must not exceed an average of 10cm in depth, measured on a minimum 100m<sup>2</sup> area. Chips may not be spread on the ground within 10m of a stream or building. Chips in excess of this amount must be re-spread, or removed from the site; and



- All work will be completed following the International Society of Arboriculture's and ANSI A300 best management practices.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Heather Beresford, Environmental Stewardship Manager at [hberesford@whistler.ca](mailto:hberesford@whistler.ca) or 604 935 8374.