



Mountain House Community Services District Newsletter

*The Mission of the District is to Provide Responsive
Service to our Growing Community
that Exceeds Expectations at a Fair Value*

February
2020

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD STREET TREES

As we all start the New Year we must keep in mind that our gardens and landscape must be prepared to begin a new year as well. Once the final litter of tree leaves have fallen and been collected, the next big chore is to prune our trees to prepare them for the coming season. As we described in our January Newsletter, certain requirements must be followed when pruning trees that are located in parkway strips and front yards. We also provided diagrams on how our trees will develop if pruned correctly. If this is your first time pruning a tree, or if you are interested in improving your skills and knowledge, we recommend purchasing a book on proper pruning techniques that you can refer to year after year. Sunset Western Garden Book is an excellent publication for guidance in pruning and overall gardening.

If you wish to immediately get started, we have a few tips that you can follow that will be beneficial to the tree and improve the appearance once leaves start to push out in the spring:

- Before starting any pruning tasks, completely remove fallen leaves from the ground and the base of the tree. Use a strong leaf rake to assure every leaf is removed. This will help the ground breath and prevent root and crown rot issues.
- If your tree still has a tree stake, you may need to remove it. If your tree is over one year old and the trunk is twice the diameter of the stake, it is more than likely ready to have tree stakes removed. A tree that stands without the help of tree stakes develops a very strong trunk and root system.
- As you prepare to prune your tree it is very important to step back and study the layout of the limbs and branches. You are essentially shaping and training the habit of the tree. Always keep in mind that a good pruning job once completed will appear as if the tree looks perfectly normal. Compare it to getting your own hair cut.
- Trees consist of a trunk, limbs, branches and twigs. Prioritize the removal of twigs and branches that are dead, damaged, rub, cross, or pointing downward. Thin the interior of the tree to allow good circulation of air. Always remember, on young trees the branches that remain might be main limbs as the tree matures, so do not prune aggressively.
- Once branches and twigs are addressed, limbs are next. Be very careful not to remove important (upright) limbs that add to the symmetry of the tree. The most common limbs that should be removed are nearest the ground that overhang walkways or block important signs along the parkway strips.

SCHEDULE OF MHCSO EVENTS

Board meetings and committee meetings are held in the Michael Forbes McGrew Board Room at the CSD office. For class and event locations please see below. If you would like additional information on the classes or events please contact Angel Lamb at alamb@sjgov.org. Please subscribe to the Google Calendar.

Mountain House Vintage Seniors Meeting

Date: Monday, February 10, 2020

Time: 10:30a - 11:30a

Location: Firehouse

For more information please email Angel Lamb at alamb@sjgov.org

Youth Action Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Time: 7:00 pm

For more information please contact Director Tingle at btingle@sjgov.org

Assemblyperson Susan Eggman's Office Hours

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Time: 10:00a-11:00a

Location: Boardroom

MHCSO Board of Directors Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Time: 7:00pm

Mountain House Vintage Seniors Bunco

Date: Monday, February 17, 2020

Time: 10:30a - 11:30a

Location: Firehouse

For more information please email Angel Lamb at alamb@sjgov.org

OFFICE CLOSURE

Please note the Mountain House Community Services Offices will be closed the following dates:

- Monday, February 17, 2020

- Most importantly, do not top or pollard the tree. Old school practices once included topping trees by cutting back the lead branches to control height. This deforms the tree and actually produces suckering. Pollarding trees is a practice you see most commonly with Mulberry Trees. This is where you see the limbs cut nearly back to the trunk every year or so.

Next month we will cover topics on tree health on how to diagnose issues and apply corrective measures. For specifications on tree pruning you may refer to January's Newsletter or you may find complete guidelines on our website under Mountain House residential Guidelines Appendix F.

MISTLETOE CONTROL FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TREES

In December standing under the mistletoe would bring you to believe that you might be in store for a peck on the cheek. In January it isn't quite as romantic, more likely it means that mistletoe is growing in a tree in your yard. If you discover this unique plant growing way up in the canopy of your dormant tree, it was probably deposited there from a bird. Mistletoe is established when a bird eats the berries from a neighboring mistletoe plant and while roosting in your tree, deposits the seeds on a branch in their droppings. The parasitic plant quickly grows roots into the host tree drawing water, nutrients and finally in late winter, the female plant berries emerge for hungry birds and the cycle repeats itself.

Mistletoe reveals itself in the winter when leaf fall from deciduous trees is complete. It is highly recommended to remove this parasitic plant when discovered to prevent the decline of the host tree that may eventually result in death. It is also equally important due to the rapid spread of the plant to adjacent trees due to the berries being irresistible to birds.

There are several ways to control mistletoe. Simple removal of the plant fails to extract the root that is embedded past the bark into the soft wood of the tree. This task will need to be performed yearly and will impact the trees health year to year. Chemical regulators available to control the plant are inconsistent, and have a low success rate even after multiple applications. The best practice is to prune the infected branch from the tree. To assure you capture the root of the plant, cut at least 12 inches from where the plant is attached or best yet, remove the entire branch at the nearest connected lateral. Severe multiple infestations might require that the entire tree be removed and replaced.

The Mountain House CSD performs yearly mistletoe control on District properties starting in late fall. Branch removal is the method used to assure a permanent solution. Hopefully with a combined effort to control this pesky parasite, the only mistletoe we will see, will be during the Holidays hanging in a spot you least suspect!

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

If your group has an activity open to the community in Mountain House please send that information to Angel Lamb no later than the 10th of the month to be included in the newsletter.

Sahaja Yoga

Date: Every Sunday

Time: 10:00am

Location: Firehouse

For more information please see

<https://www.sahajayoga.org/>

Mountain House Rotary Meeting

Date: 2nd Friday of the Month

Time: 9:00am – 10:00am

Location: Firehouse

For more information please contact Sachin Pingle at mountainhouserotary@gmail.com

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