



Help protect trees, so they can protect us

New tree protection laws apply from 1 January 2024

Canberra’s landscape is enhanced by the trees and plants in public spaces and in our gardens. Our majestic eucalypts, beautiful autumn leaves and spring blossoms are part of our identity as the bush capital.

In the face of a changing climate, trees in our cities are more important than ever.

Every tree in Canberra – both on public and private land – is part of an urban forest. New laws have been developed to protect the forest that protects us.

If you have a large tree on your block, the new laws may apply to you.

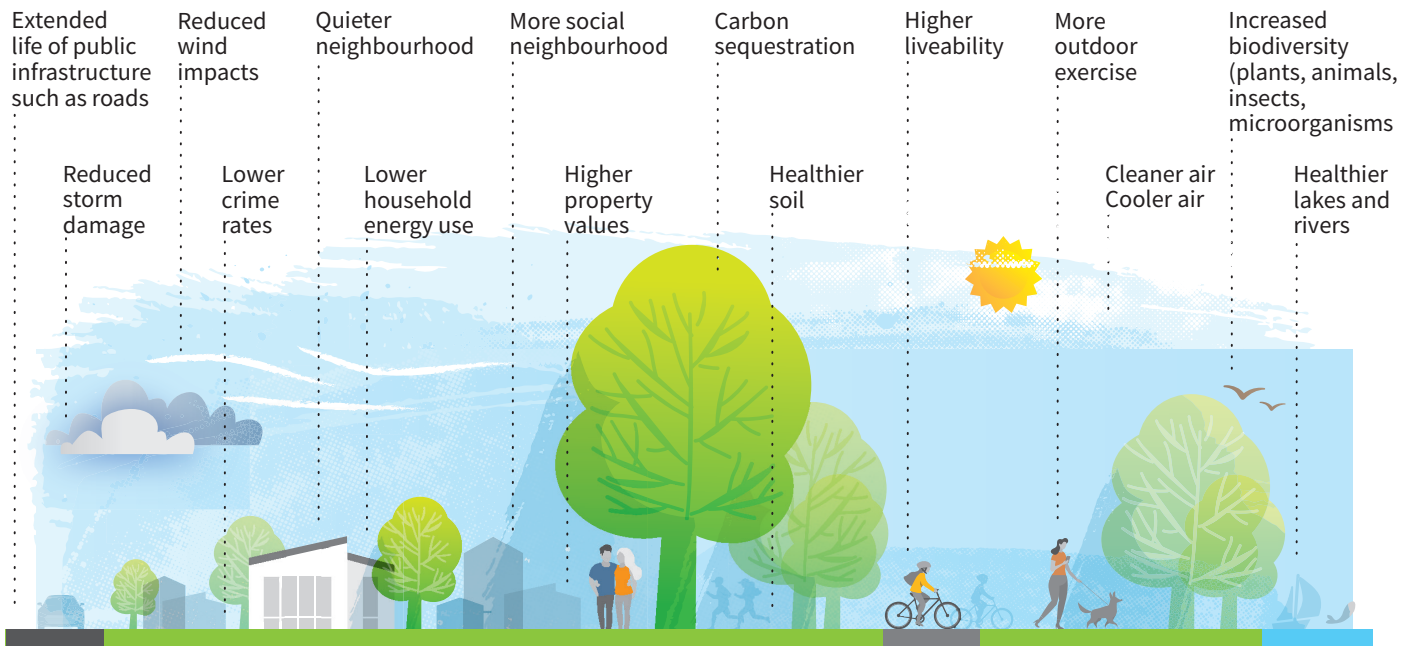
Protected trees

A tree on private land is protected if it:

- is 8m or taller
- has a canopy 8m or wider
- has a trunk circumference of 1m or more at 1.4m above natural ground level
- is a registered tree – that is, the tree has been identified as being of exceptional value and is listed in the ACT Tree Register
- is a dead native tree on leased land that at 1.4m above natural ground level has a trunk circumference of at least 1.88m
- was planted in the last five years as part of a Canopy Contribution Agreement.



Benefits of trees in the urban environment



You must have permission to work on or near protected trees.

This includes trees on neighbouring public or private land.

Works that may impact a protected tree include:

- tree removal
- tree pruning
- utility maintenance or installation
- building or landscape construction.

You can request permission to work on or near a protected tree on private land by completing a Tree Activity Application online.

If the work on or near a protected tree is subject to another form of approval, such as a development, building or driveway application, you can either:

- include an approved Tree Activity Application in your other application, or
- request permission to work on or near a protected tree as part of the other application process.

If you're not sure which application process applies to your situation, please visit the website or contact Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

Canopy Contribution Agreements

If you're a homeowner and you receive approval to remove a protected tree, you will be required to enter into a Canopy Contribution Agreement with the ACT Government. This is an agreement to plant two replacement trees on your block per tree removed or, if replanting is not possible, to pay a set \$600 contribution per replacement tree not planted.

Exemptions may be granted, including for people who are experiencing financial or social hardship. If a third party (such as a builder) completes the Tree Activity Application on your behalf, the replanting and repayment requirements will still be those relevant to you as the homeowner.

Financial contributions will fund tree planting, maintenance and renewal activities throughout Canberra.

Need some help?

A qualified arborist will be able to advise you on your tree options. Arborists specialise in tree care and safe tree work. Their roles include undertaking activities such as pruning, protecting, assessing, planting and removing trees.

