

TOWN OF GREENSBORO

RIGHT OF WAY CLEARING AND BRUSH CUTTING POLICY

The Selectmen of a town, if necessary, shall cause to be cut and burned, or removed from within the limits of the highways under their care, trees and bushes which obstruct the view of the highway ahead or that cause damage to the highway or that are objectionable from a material or scenic standpoint. Shade and fruit trees that have been set out or marked by the abutting landowners shall be preserved if the usefulness or safety of the highway is not impaired. Young trees standing at a proper distance from the roadbed and from each other, and banks and hedges of bushes that serve as a protection to the highway or add beauty to the roadside, shall be preserved. On state highways, the secretary shall have the same authority as the selectmen.

19 V. S. A. §904

It is the intention of this policy to establish safe and reasonable standards for maintenance of the Town highway right of way, without undue sacrifice of scenic beauty. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers:

Trees are the object most often hit and result in more fatalities than any other fixed object.

The following standards will be applied:

1. A clear zone of 10' from the edge of the traveled way will be established. On designated lightly traveled roads this may be reduced to 5'. The edge of the traveled way will be measured from the center of the road to a point that is the recommended width for the road in question.¹
2. All trees and shrubs within the clear zone will be removed with the following exceptions:
 - a. Fruit trees that have been set out or marked by owner provided that the tree does not obstruct the view ahead, interfere with plowing or maintenance of the road or the road drainage system, obstruct the traveled way, impair the safety of the highway, or otherwise cause damage to the highway.
 - b. Shade trees that have been set out or marked by owner provided that the tree does not obstruct the view ahead, interfere with plowing or maintenance of the road or the road drainage system, obstruct the traveled way, impair the safety of the highway, or otherwise cause damage to the highway.
 - c. Trees that are part of a hedgerow will be left in place under the following conditions:
 1. The tree has a circumference of at least 36 inches
 2. The tree does not interfere with plowing or maintenance of the road or the road drainage system, or otherwise cause damage to the highway
 3. The tree does not obstruct the view ahead or provide a hazard to safe travel of the road
 4. The tree does not cause damage to Town equipment
 5. In the event that such a tree dies or becomes a hazard due to failing health, the tree will be removed; it may only be replaced by a tree that is outside of the Town right of way.
3. All new utility poles will be placed outside the clear zone. Any poles that are replaced will be put outside the clear zone where possible.
4. When trees and brush are removed the stumps shall be either removed or cut to a level of 4 inches or less.²
5. Landowners who have placed obstructions such as fences or hedges in the clear zone may be asked to remove them if necessary.

6. Once the clear zone has been established on any road, it will be maintained by annual mowing and trimming as needed. No subsequent encroachment on the clear zone will be permitted.

1 Recommended by Vermont Local Roads Program

2 Recommended by Vermont Local Roads Program and Local Low Volume Roads and Streets (LLVRS) by the American Society of Civil Engineers. Vermont Local Roads program recommends chipping them out.