

Hazard Tree Removal – Pine Lake Park

What are “hazard trees”?

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission is a careful steward of the over 60,000 acres of land we maintain. An important aspect of our vegetation management is to ensure that trees are kept clear of areas where they could pose a danger to our infrastructure, our operations, or to people.

In the case where trees become unstable, diseased, grow too close to a pipeline or in any other way pose the potential for damage, we remove them carefully under the supervision of an arborist. We only designate something to be a “hazard tree” after careful evaluation.

Pine Lake Park/Stern Grove

While Pine Lake Park in Stern Grove is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks, there are two significant water transmission lines which run below ground along a roughly north-south axis through the park. These two pipelines, installed in the 1930s and 1940s, supply millions of gallons of water to the Sunset Reservoir, which serves hundreds of thousands of San Francisco residents with drinking water, as well as supplying water to the firefighting system. Over the past 75 or more years, trees became established in close proximity to these vital pipelines and have now become a hazard to their continued operation.



Removal

Depending on the circumstances, trees may either be felled by cutting them at the base and allowing them to fall in a controlled manner, or else may be cut and lowered by a crane. In general, the base of the trunk and the root ball are left in place. This is to ensure both stability of the soil in the area of the tree, as well as to avoid any damage that pulling up the roots could cause to any pipelines or other underground infrastructure. The remaining trunk and roots are then treated to prevent regrowth from occurring.

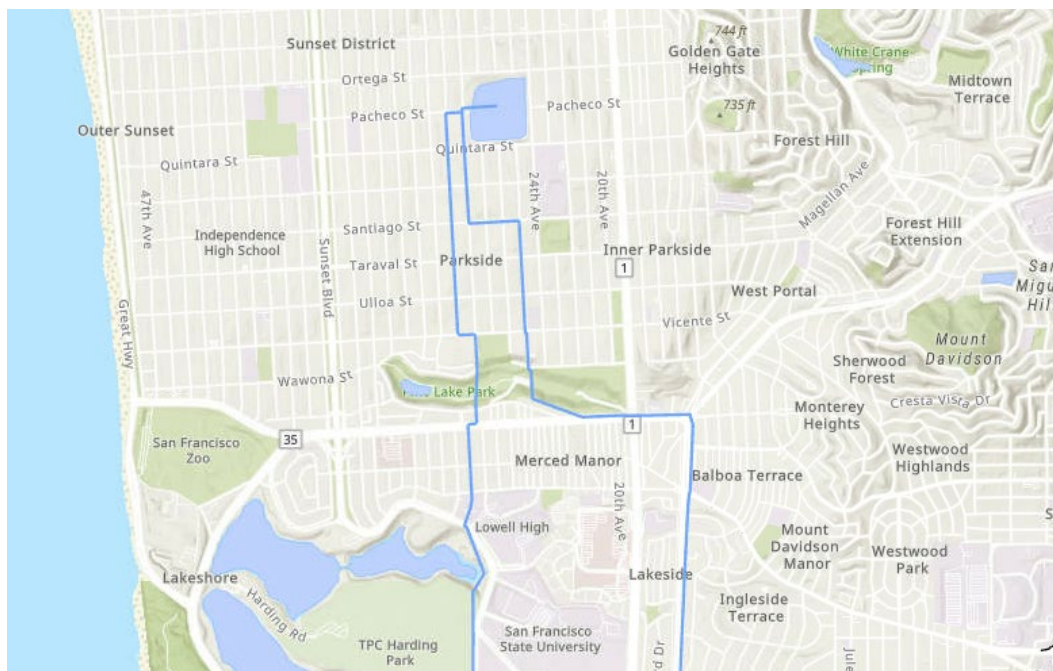
In most cases, undergrowth is left undisturbed in order to allow for the natural filling in of the area. Only in areas where there are no pipelines or other appurtenances will we re-establish seedlings or shrubs.

After trees have been felled, they will be chipped onsite before removal. This can lead to temporary instances of noise and dust in the immediate area. In some cases, after branches are removed tree trunks may be left in place as a part of a vegetation management plan.

Two areas where hazard trees are to be removed within 25 feet of the Sunset Supply Pipeline



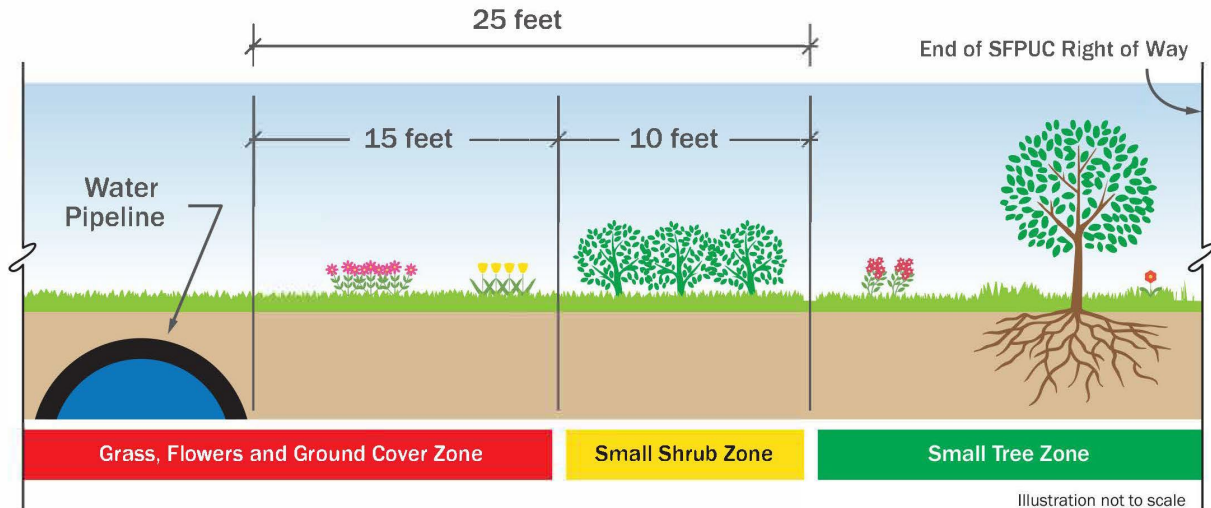
The Sunset Supply Pipelines (approximate location)



SFPUC guidelines for the protection of crucial water and sewer pipelines. See our [Right of Way Integrated Vegetation Management Policy](#)

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)

Right Of Way (ROW) Landscape Vegetation Requirements



The following vegetation types are permitted on the ROW within the appropriate zones.

Plantings that may be permitted directly above existing and future pipelines:

Ground cover, grasses, flowers, and very low growing plants that reach no more than one foot in height at maturity.



Plantings that may be permitted 15–25 feet from the edge of existing and future pipelines:

Shrubs and plants that grow no more than five feet tall in height at maturity.



Plantings that may be permitted 25 feet or more from the edge of existing and future pipelines:

Small trees or shrubs that grow to a maximum of twenty feet in height and fifteen feet in canopy width or less.

