

6.4 TREE POLICIES

In order to be as sensitive as possible to the individual homeowner's needs — and continue to maintain the overall park-like theme of the development — the following policy is geared toward maintaining the original landscaping plan. Moreover, maintaining the overall head count of trees within the Association is given priority in order to avoid a slow degradation of the slopes, which would result from tree removal near homes where trees are not appreciated.

6.4.1 Tree Removal

If an individual homeowner voices a concern to the Board in regards to what he or she (the homeowner) considers an unsafe tree condition, our slope maintenance crew will evaluate the tree to see if there is an obvious problem. If they cannot see an obvious problem and, after having discussed this with the homeowner there still exists a disagreement as to the safety of the tree, the Board will then authorize an outside tree service (licensed Arborist) to look at the tree under the following conditions:

6.4.1.1 If the Arborist finds that the tree is a safety issue, then the Association will remove the tree and plant a new one at the Association's cost in the general vicinity. In addition, the Association will pay the Arborist's fee for evaluating the tree.

6.4.1.2 If the outside tree service representative's or arborist's evaluation of the tree is that he/she finds it to be healthy and well rooted, the homeowner will be responsible for the outside tree service representative's or arborist's fee for the evaluation of said tree.

6.4.1.3 If the homeowner still wishes to remove a tree that the arborist finds healthy, the homeowner will assume responsibility for the entire cost of removing the healthy tree and replacing it with another tree. The replacement tree will be a 15-gallon tree planted in order to maintain the tree head count. The replacement tree will be planted in the general vicinity where the old tree was removed, but not necessarily in the same place, taking into account the wishes of the homeowner as much as possible. **See the HOA's web site www.sanelijohills1.org for up to date list approved trees.** If you do not have access to the Internet please send a written request to: San Elijo Hills #1 HOA; P.O. Box; 232; Solana Beach, CA 92075, and a copy of the list will be mailed to you.

6.4.1.4 If an individual homeowner wants to have a tree removed because the homeowner does not like a tree in a particular area or does not like the leaves from the tree falling onto his pad, the homeowner will assume responsibility for removing the tree and must pay for a 15-gallon replacement tree (including pickup and planting) and the hauling off of debris. The replacement tree will be planted in the general vicinity of the removed tree. The actual placement or location of the new tree must be agreed upon by the homeowner and the Board. Again, the purpose of the replacement tree is to maintain the tree Ahead count." (See 6.1.4 for the approved replacement trees.)

6.4.2 Tree Trimming

The general policy to preserve the park-like theme of the neighborhood is to leave the trees in their natural state as much as humanly possible. Trimming and balancing¹ will be done as required for the health and safety of the trees and the safety of the homes near the trees.

6.4.2.1 On those slopes which are under Association irrigation, the HOA maintenance crew and tree service contractors will endeavor to keep all trees pruned and balanced. The HOA will re-balance trees that have grown in such a manner as to have too much growth on any one side. The HOA will also remove dead limbs as they become necessary. At no time should a tree be topped².

6.4.2.2 The HOA usually will not lace³ eucalyptus trees, as it has a tendency to stimulate excess limb and sucker growth in the tree following the lacing. Lacing will often improve the appearance of the tree in the following two or three years. However, the tree will usually fill out in such a manner that continued ongoing lacing will be required in order to keep the tree from developing an overly large crown. Trees with large crowns are very subject to sail pressure during high winds, which in turn places undesirable forces on the tree's trunk and root system.

6.4.2.3 For those homeowners who desire the appearance of a laced tree on the slope behind their home, the HOA will usually agree with the homeowner having the tree laced at his or her own expense. However, as with any exterior modifications, the homeowners must submit the request to the Covenants/Architectural Committee. Once the homeowner has a tree laced, the homeowner must continue to maintain the future trimming of the tree at his or her own expense. In order to ensure that the trees will not be susceptible to the long-horned borer, it is recommended that any lacing be done between November and March.

6.4.2.4 The HOA will have all tree on the slope easements inspected by a certified arborist at least every two years. The HOA will remove all trees the arborist classifies as a hazard within six months. Trees that the arborist recommends to be trimmed will be trimmed within two years. Trees that are removed or fall will be replaced at a location that takes the safety of structures into account.

¹ Balancing—to shape a tree which might lean or fall over due to too much growth on any one side.

² Topped—tree whose top limbs have been sawed off, often reduced to stubs. The tree will not grow back in an attractive, natural fashion.

³ Lace—procedure used to thin branches in order to improve a tree's ability to withstand strong winds, as well as open up views.