

**FPR Procedure**  
**Hazard Tree Surveys on Forests, Parks and Recreation Lands**

**PURPOSE:**

This procedure is intended to provide a uniform method of surveying for, identifying and correcting trees that could potentially pose a risk to humans and/or property while visiting/using certain Vermont state lands.

**APPLICABILITY:**

The procedure applies to all areas of State Forests, Parks and Recreation lands having facilities developed to allow for public access and use (e.g. camping areas, picnic areas, high use parking lots and roads, etc.). It does not cover areas open to the public which have limited facilities, improvements or use (e.g., forests, undeveloped parks, trails, shorelines outside of developed recreation areas, etc.).

**PROCEDURE:**

The Forestry and Parks Divisions shall coordinate all surveys and storage of resultant data with the Regional Parks Manager and District Forestry Manager.

Where this procedure is applicable, areas shall be divided in two categories, with different surveying schedules:

- High Risk Areas – where people and/or property are frequently present for any length of time other than just passing through, so that there is a stronger likelihood that a falling tree or limb may cause damage to persons or property. These include camping areas, day use areas, developed recreation sites and designated parking lots. High risk areas shall be surveyed once a year. Individual high risk areas may need additional surveys due to weather incidents, or at the request of the Regional Park Manager or District Forestry Manager.
- Low Risk Areas – where people and/or property are present irregularly and/or temporarily. These include designated roadside areas and facility access roads. Low risk areas shall be surveyed once every two years.

Each regional office will maintain a map of all high and low risk areas.

Forestry Division personnel who have been trained on how to identify hazard trees and complete the surveys shall conduct the surveys. When surveying areas in State Parks, the responsible Regional Park Manager or designee will accompany assigned forestry

personnel, and survey data and maps will be transferred to Parks Division personnel for action and long-term storage of data. All surveys shall be conducted according to the following minimum standards:

- Survey shall be done at a time acceptable to the Parks Regional Manager and the District Forestry Manager and in time to allow for necessary action(s) to be completed prior to a time of high use.
- Areas with seasonal openings and where high risk trees have not been removed or maintained prior to regular seasonal opening for public use shall be closed to the public.
- All high risk trees shall be marked with highly visible tree paint other than blue.
- Data collected from each survey shall be recorded on the most current “Hazard Tree Survey Form”. Only data concerning high risk trees shall be recorded and maintained. If practical, trees will be identified on an attached map. The original shall be sent to the Parks Regional Manager or the District Forestry Manager in a timely manner.
- For state parks and campground areas the Parks Regional Manager or their designee shall record actions taken and archive the completed survey forms in accordance with the State’s retention policy. For all other Forests, Parks and Recreation lands the District Forestry Manager or their designee shall record actions taken and archive the completed survey forms in accordance with the State’s retention policy.

**RATIONALE:**

To provide a responsible and documented method for minimizing the potential for injury to humans and/or damage to property.

Effective Date:

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Commissioner