

## **SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Why is there a Tree Ordinance?**

Trees are a valuable part of our communities, providing beauty, shade and increasing property value. Trees between the sidewalk and the curb are under the authority of the Township.

### **When do I need a permit?**

A permit is needed to plant or remove a tree, to trim living branches greater than 1" in diameter, or to perform any sidewalk or sewer repair that will affect roots. The Township does not allow trees to be removed simply for the sake of removing them. Trees must be dangerous or diseased without remedy. If a permit for removal is granted, the stump must be ground to 6 inches below ground level and a replacement tree must be replanted. Replanting can often be done by the Township as budget allows. Replanting ensures that future residents enjoy the same benefits that we do from trees.

### **What if a tree has caused damage to the sidewalk?**

Because of the value placed on larger trees, damage to sidewalks and curbs should be repaired in lieu of removing established trees. Sidewalk grinding or ramping can remove a trip hazard. For severe lifting, the sidewalk must be removed and relaid, preferably curving around large roots. Root pruning before repouring can minimize chances of a reoccurrence. Your tree service and concrete contractors should work together. Most concrete contractors are not root pruning experts and can make a tree unsafe. An arborist is recommended for root pruning.

### **What if a tree has caused damage to the sewer line?**

Often trees are blamed for sewer line problems when the real problem is older pipes that are crumbling. Roots do not have the ability to penetrate sound lines, and removing the closest tree does not solve the problem. Once replaced with new plastic pipes, tree roots can no longer invade. A line cleaning service can clean roots out of sewer lines and will guarantee free flow for 6 months. Following a clean out, homeowners should be doing preventative maintenance by applying root inhibition products regularly to sanitary lines. Chronic root invasion indicates a failing sewer line.

### **I'm replacing my sewer line and it goes right under a tree. What do I do?**

It is often possible to replace a line without removing the tree. Numerous local services offer trench free lateral replacement. These companies replace laterals without digging up yards, sidewalks, and trees.