

Vegetation Management Plan

Introduction:

Wasaga Distribution is a small LDC servicing the Town of Wasaga Beach and comprises a total service area of 61 square km. The Utility serves approximately 15,000 residential and commercial customers and has more than 235 kilometres of conductor, both overhead and underground.

Wasaga Distribution has a comprehensive tree trimming program that maintains and removes trees and limbs along utility easements to prevent contact with high-voltage electrical wires. The purpose of the Vegetation Management Plan is to ensure public safety and provide a reliable electrical service to all customers by preventing unscheduled power interruptions.

1. Objective:

Wasaga Distribution's vegetation management program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Ensuring appropriate clearances between vegetation and utility infrastructure.
- Minimizing the risk of tree-related outages.
- Enhancing public safety by identifying and removing hazardous trees.
- Preserving the health and aesthetics of trees and natural areas.

2. Inventory and Assessment:

Wasaga Distribution will maintain a comprehensive inventory of utility infrastructure, including power lines, poles, transformers, and substations. Wasaga Distribution will strive to have a strong understanding of existing vegetation to identify plant species, the health and condition of the vegetation, and determine the location and density within the areas of concern.

3. Risk Assessment:

Wasaga Distribution will perform a risk assessment as part of our regular inspections to identify any potential fire hazards, risks to infrastructure, or risks to public safety. Wasaga Distribution will take into consideration tree health, species characteristics, and environmental sensitivity. High-risk areas identified will be prioritized.

4. Management Techniques:

Wasaga Distribution will deploy the following techniques and strategies to manage vegetation:

- Identify hazardous trees and either remove or choose appropriate mitigation measures for hazardous trees.
- Crown lifting – remove lower branches to maintain clearance.

- Crown thinning – removing selective branches to reduce density.
- Crown reduction – reducing the height or spread of a tree.
- Directional pruning – shaping the tree away from utility infrastructure.
- Tree removal.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular monitoring and evaluation of the vegetation management activities will be done to assess the effectiveness of this plan and to make any necessary adjustments.

To ensure ongoing effectiveness Wasaga Distribution will complete the following:

- Monitor annual vegetation regrowth assess and identify new risks.
- Record annual activity in our GIS-based asset management systems for efficient monitoring.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

Wasaga Distribution will actively engage stakeholders by:

- Informing stakeholders (residents, municipality, etc.) about vegetation management activities.
- Provide educational materials on the importance of vegetation management and its benefits to public safety and service reliability.
- Respond to inquiries or concerns from the public regarding tree-trimming operations.

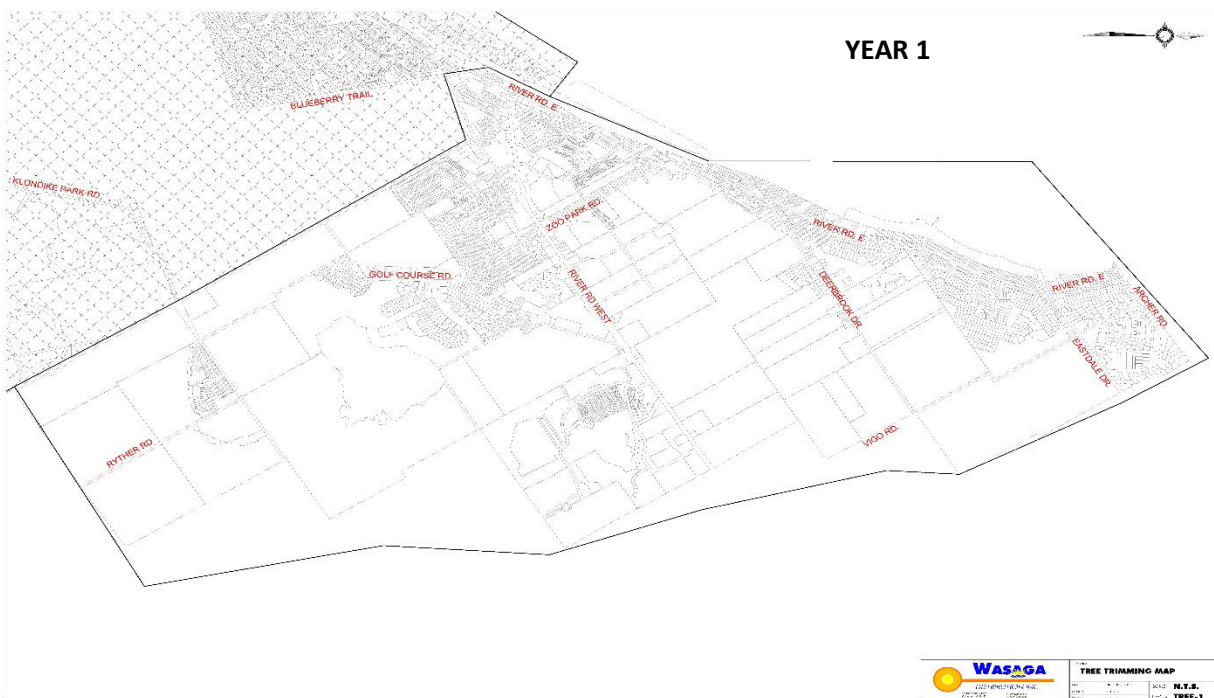
7. Compliance and Regulations:

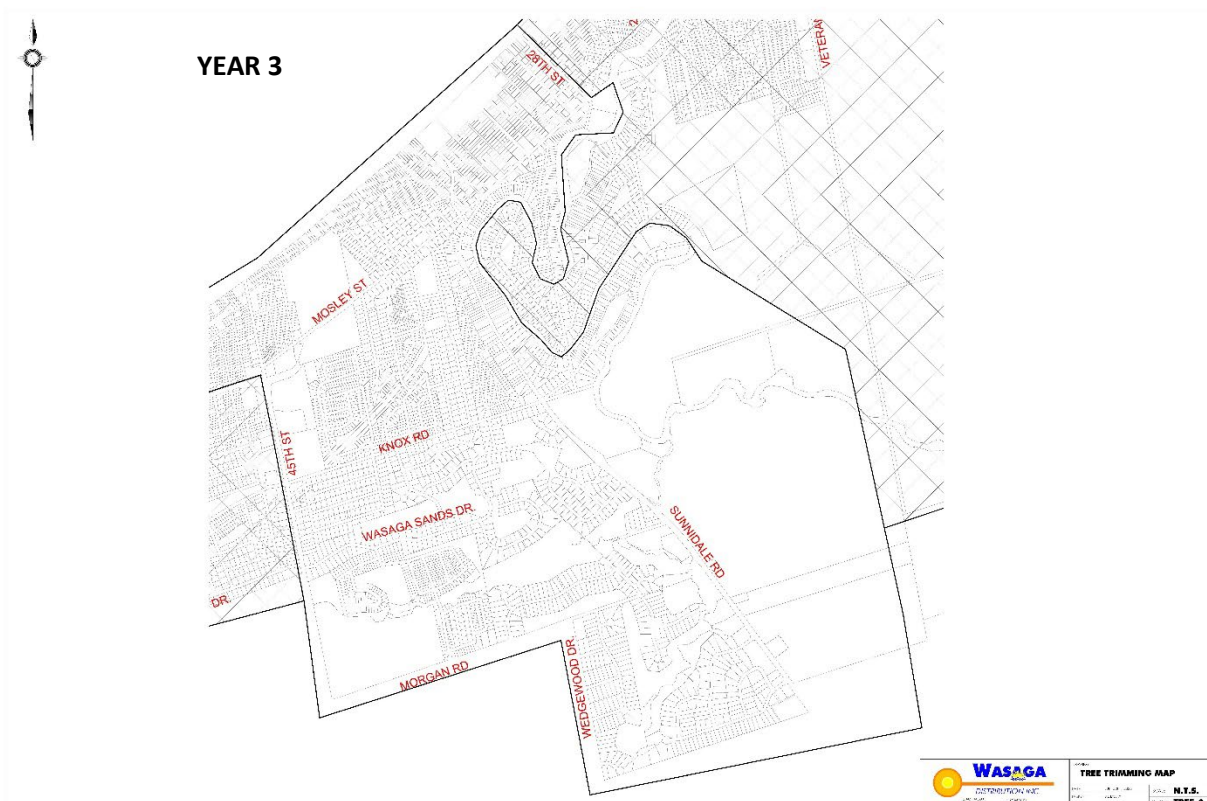
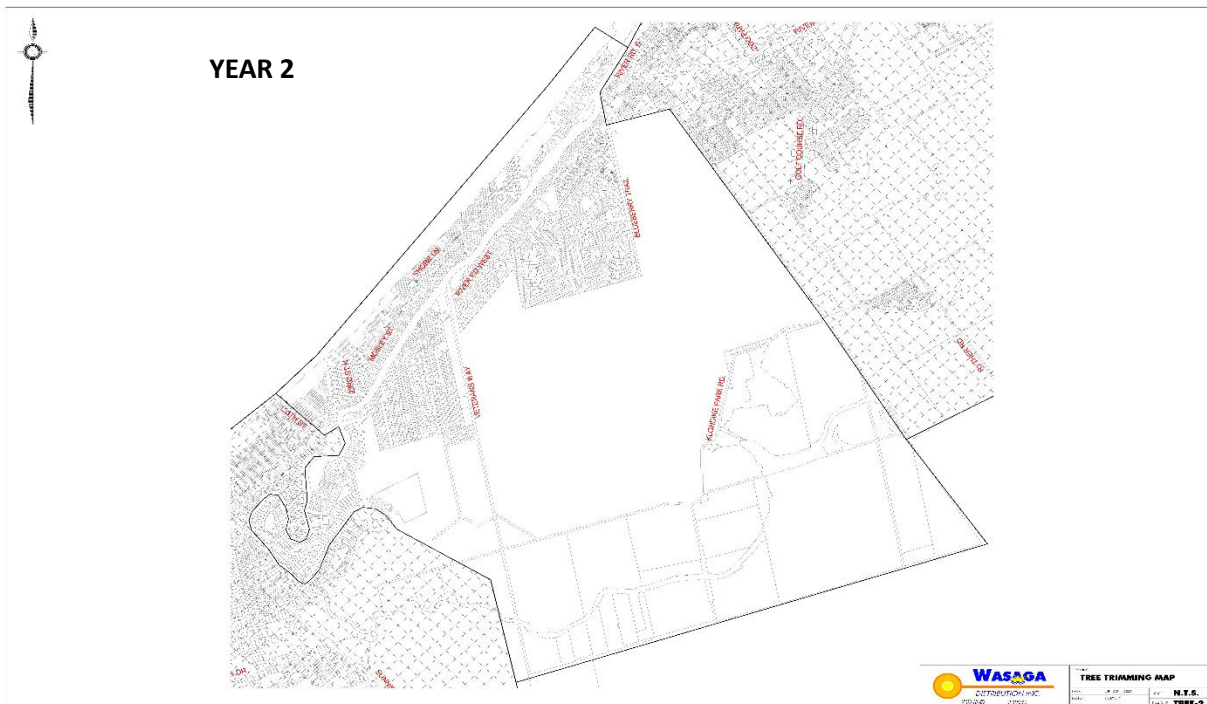
Wasaga Distributions management program complies with the following regulations and standards:

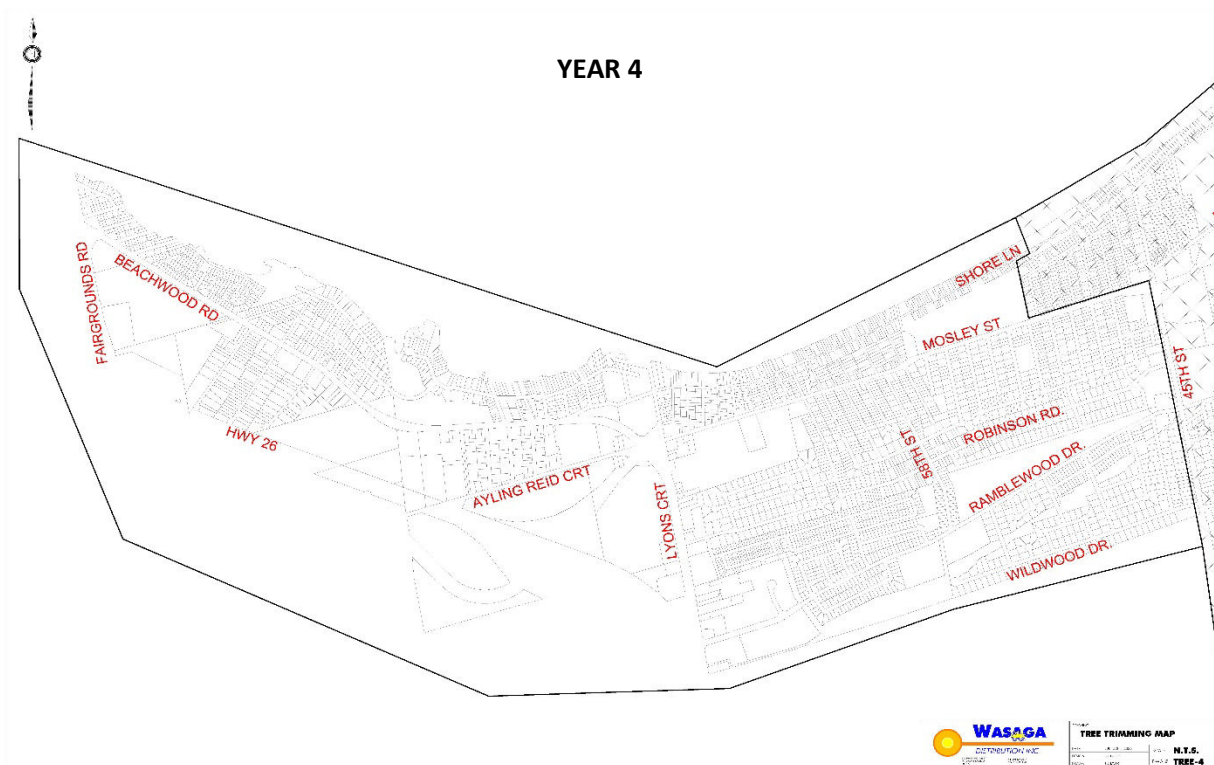
- Ontario Regulation 63/09: Vegetation Control.
- Ontario Regulation 22/04: Electrical Distribution Safety Regulation.
- Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Z133-18: Safety Requirements for Arboricultural Operations.

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9. Record keeping and Reporting:

Wasaga Distribution will maintain comprehensive records and generate reports to evaluate and improve the vegetation management program by:

- Documenting and archiving all vegetation management activities, including tree inspections, trimming and removals.
- Generate an annual report summarizing the program's effectiveness, including outage data related to vegetation issues.

10. Contractor Selection and Training

Wasaga Distribution will engage contractors to assist with maintaining our vegetation management plan, before selecting a contractor Wasaga Distribution will ensure the following:

- Select competent, qualified, and experienced tree-trimming contractors.
- Contractor training, safety protocols, and adherence to industry standards.
- Require contractors to provide appropriate insurance coverage and obtain necessary permits for their work.

11. Budget and Resources:

It is essential to allocate appropriate resources, including funding, equipment, and personnel, for effective vegetation management. Wasaga Distribution will allocate an appropriate annual amount to implement this plan.

12. Plan Review and Revision:

Wasaga Distribution will continuously improve the vegetation management program through periodic reviews and feedback:

- Conduct an annual review, to assess the effectiveness of the plan and make necessary revisions.
- Consider input from utility staff, contractors, and stakeholders to enhance the vegetation management program.

By implementing this written plan, Wasaga Distribution aims to maintain a safe and reliable utility infrastructure system while preserving the natural beauty of our community.