

Haddonfield Shade Tree Commission How to Identify and Measure a Borough Tree

The Borough owns and is responsible for most trees planted within the Borough right-of-way and on Borough-owned property such as parks, recreation areas and around public buildings.

The Borough right-of-way includes not only the park strips, the land between the street and the sidewalk, but also may extend past the sidewalk onto areas often thought by residents to be private property. Similarly, on those streets where there is no sidewalk, the Borough right-of-way usually extends beyond the street and onto the adjacent unpaved ground. The width of the Borough right-of-way varies depending on the street and, often, depending on the specific block. This information is available through the Borough's Office of Tax Assessment, which maintains the property tax maps throughout the Borough. Residents' property deeds and associated property surveys frequently contain this information, too.

The Borough's Department of Public Works maintains an inventory of Borough-owned trees within the park strips, as well as many trees on public lands. The Inventory of Borough Street Trees is available also on this web page; this pdf file lists the Borough-owned trees by address, their site location in the park strip.

The tree site location within the inventory is denoted by F (front of the property), S (side of the property), and, in a few locations, B (back of or alley behind the property). The associated site location numbers ascend in the same direction as the street numbers. For example, a corner property with four trees, two in front and two on the side street, would have trees numbered F1, F2, S1 and S2. In cases where a tree is growing partially onto the Borough right-of-way, at least 50 percent of the tree trunk diameter must be within the right-of-way for the tree to be considered a Borough tree.

The approximate diameter of the tree in inches and the name of the tree species, both common (English) and botanical (Latin), are also shown in the inventory. The diameter shown was most probably collected in May 2010, when the Borough inventoried its trees, and understates the actual tree diameter. Throughout the life of a tree, its trunk diameter increases. The trunk diameter increases faster in younger, faster growing trees, but even mature trees continue to expand at the "waist". To determine the exact diameter of the tree (Diameter at Breast Height or DBH), one should measure the tree trunk circumference at 4.5 feet above the ground and then divide by π (3.14). Alternatively, one can use a D-ring measuring tape, available at an arborist supply center, to measure the DBH directly.

If there you have a concern about a specific tree, contact the Department of Public Works to verify whether that tree is a Borough tree, its species and DBH.