

Planning and Infrastructure

December 2015

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Removal of trees and other plants

Also refer to other [Landscaping](#) fact sheets in this series.

Plants may need to be removed for a variety of reasons.

- The original landscaping at your school may no longer serve the purpose of your current grounds use requirements;
- Plants may have died, be diseased or damaged or are causing damage to buildings;
- Plants may have growth habits that are hazardous; or
- Self-sown plants may be growing in the wrong place.

Hazardous plants are those that:

- May shed large branches without warning;
- Have thorns, prickly or spiky foliage or produce large fruit (eg Coconuts, Bougainvillea or Dwarf Date Palms);
- Have aggressive root systems that can cause damage to buildings, services or paving;
- May be an allergy risk or may irritate skin or eyes;
- Are poisonous*;
- Attract bees close to the ground;
- Are dead or dying;
- Have seed pods that may present a choking hazard for small children; or
- Have the potential to spread into the natural environment and become a weed.

*** If poisoning is suspected contact the POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE on 13 11 26.**

OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools should follow [Playground](#), [Monthly Playground](#) and [Playground Safety inspection procedures](#) (http://www.education.nt.gov.au/about-us/policies?result_485_result_page=P) as part of their school Occupational Health and Safety management.

When removing trees it is recommended that you:

- Use a qualified professional (following procurement guidelines) to carry out the work and ensure that they have public liability insurance;
- Ensure safety of students and teachers by clearly fencing off the area or carry out the work out of school hours;
- Trees to be removed are to be clearly identified with paint and confirmed prior to removal to avoid mistakes;
- Check for the location of overhead or underground services prior to tree removal. Removing a stump may damage services that are close to or under roots;
- Remove the stump to below ground level using a stump grinder;
- Remove and dispose of all of the tree removed or have the tree turned into mulch that can be used to mulch new or existing plantings; and
- Place topsoil and grass over area disturbed by tree removal or reinstate planting bed.

FUNDING SOURCE

Grounds maintenance is part of the school operational budget.