How to Measure a Tree’s Diameter

To quickly estimate a tree’s diameter hold a ruler up to the tree at 1.37 m (4 ½ feet) above ground level (this is an average person’s breast height). If the tree is well undersize (<20 cm. diameter measured at 1.37 m. above ground level), you don’t need to notify the Town to injure or destroy the tree.

1. Measure the circumference (like measuring your waist) of the tree at 1.37 m (4 ½ feet) above the ground level (this is an average person’s breast height.)
2. Use a calculator to divide the number by 3.1416. This will give you the diameter. The diameter is the width of the tree trunk.

For this tree the accurate diameter measured at 1.37 m. above ground level is:

Circumference = 69 cm.

Calculated diameter = **22 cm.**

(69 divided by 3.1416 = 22)
**For a tree with multiple stems:**
Add the average diameter of the multiple stems above the main fork of the tree to the diameter of the stem immediately below the main fork.

(i.e., if there are five stems above the main fork, measure the diameter of each, add them up and divide them by five to get the average diameter — then add that number to the diameter of the stem below the fork).

**Question:** The circumference of this tree at breast height (measured at 1.37 cm. of ground level) is 330 cm. What is the diameter of the tree at breast height (DBH)?

**Answer:** You must divide 330 by 3.1416. The diameter of the tree at breast height (DBH) is 105 cm.

**Question:** Do I need to apply for a tree permit to remove this tree?

**Answer:** Yes. Because the diameter of the tree measured at breast height (DBH) is greater than 76 cm.