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Thirdly, before cutting a tree down a strata corporation should check with their local municipality. In response to growing public concerns, regarding the need to have regulatory powers to protect trees, the Provincial government amended the Municipal Act in 1992 enabling municipalities to pass local tree protection bylaws. Many municipalities now have bylaws limiting or restricting tree removal from private property. In some cases municipal bylaws even require that trees are properly maintained or they can restrict the amount of trimming, pruning or alterations that are allowed. Municipalities with tree protection bylaws typically require that an application for a tree cutting permit is completed and approved, plus a fee be paid. If the appropriate permit is not sought municipal bylaws often allow for penalties, including fines and/or the need to replace the removed tree with a like-sized tree to the one that was removed.

An example of a city with a tree protection bylaw is Kelowna. Any person who violates the tree protection bylaw is liable for a fine not exceeding $2,000 for each violation. Where more than one tree is cut down, a separate offence is committed in respect to each tree. Kelowna's bylaw further states that when a protected tree is cut down, the person who committed the offence may be required to replace the tree at a ratio of two replacement trees for each tree removed. In addition to the City of Kelowna, the City of Vancouver, City of Victoria, City of Prince George, City of Abbotsford, City of Port Coquitlam, and the City of Nanaimo are among the many municipalities that have tree protection bylaws. Municipal tree protection bylaws vary; therefore, a strata corporation should always check with the local municipality before cutting down a tree.

Fourthly, if a strata does decide to cut down a tree after following proper procedures, no owner should take on the task themselves. What if the tree fell incorrectly and landed on a building or hydro wires? What if an owner was injured in the process? No strata corporation should risk such a liability. If the decision is made to cut down a tree then professional advice and assistance should be sought. When hiring a professional the strata should require proof of appropriate WCB coverage as well as professional liability coverage. The strata corporation should also have the contract reviewed by a lawyer to ensure the strata corporation is protected if something is to go wrong.

Trees provide many environment benefits: they clean the air, buffer noise, catch rain water, protect against the sun’s rays, moderate temperatures and provide shade in the summer. Don’t get caught asking the important questions too late - once a tree is cut down it is gone forever. Therefore, before removing a tree a strata corporation should do their research to ensure any action they take complies with all applicable legislation and ensure proper approval is obtained.