



# WEED & REFUSE ABATEMENT PROGRAM



## WHAT IS THE WEED & REFUSE ABATEMENT PROGRAM?

The purpose of this program is to prevent fire hazards posed by overgrown weeds and the accumulation of combustible materials, as well as enhance the appearance of the City.

City staff will inspect vacant lots within Ontario twice a year during Spring and Fall. Additional inspections may occur due to weather. Staff will ensure that minimum fire safety standards are adhered to (see standards below).

The Ontario Municipal Code property maintenance section requires all properties in the City to be maintained free of debris, with trees trimmed and dilapidated fences removed or repaired. If a vacant lot is not in compliance at the time of initial inspection, the property owner will be issued a Notice of Violation along with the corresponding fee. If after a second inspection the vacant lot is still not in compliance, a civil penalty, re-inspection fee, and a Notice of Intent to Abate will also be issued. Staff will then direct a City contractor to abate all weeds, rubbish, and/or refuse on the vacant lot.

All costs associated with abatement of weeds and refuse will be assessed to the property owner. Failure to pay fines, penalties and abatement costs will result in a special assessment being placed on the property tax bill.

## MINIMUM FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS

- All brush must not exceed 6 inches in height.
- Noxious or dangerous weeds must be removed.
- Clear flammable vegetation a minimum of 30 feet around structure, occupied or not. Some conditions may require up to 100 feet of clearance.
- Parcels up to 1 acre shall be completely abated, including the parkway.
- Parcels 1 to 5 acres require 30 foot clearance around structures and perimeter property lines, including any parkway. Additional 30 foot cross fuel breaks may also be required.
- Parcels larger than 5 acres require 30 foot clearance around structure and perimeter property lines to edge of street, in addition to 30 foot cross breaks as needed to separate the remaining vegetation into sections no larger than 5 acres.
- Keep property clear of combustible debris, such as trash and dead vegetation.
- Keep vegetation cleared from under the eaves of houses.
- Trim tree branches to at least 10 feet from the structure and chimney.
- Clear leaves, pine needles, and debris from roof and gutters.
- Ladder fuels, (i.e. tall grasses, shrubs, tree branches) shall be kept no less than 8 feet from ground level.

## FINES FOR REFUSAL TO ABATE WEED & REFUSE CONDITIONS

Notice of Violation  
\$110

Re-inspection  
\$50

Civil Penalties  
\$500

Abatement  
\$285  
*Administration fee plus contractor cost and warrant if needed*

*Current as of May 2021  
Fees Subject to Change*