

Illegal tree cutting will lead to a minimum \$500 fine in Caledon

By Rob Paul

Caledon Town Council approved amendments to the Woodland Conservation By-law 2000-100 giving staff the authority to issue tickets to anyone cutting down trees without proper permits and authorization.

The fine for cutting down trees illegally is a minimum of \$500 per ticket with additional fines possibly through court proceedings.

This amendment comes as illegal tree cutting has been on the rise over the last three years. As documented by municipal staff, some of the mature trees that have recently been cut down are more than 50 years old.

?In the short time I've been with the Town, this is a big problem which was the purpose in engaging with the Town's Communication Department,? said John DeCourcy, Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement.

Trees play a vital role in addressing climate change by absorbing carbon from the atmosphere?this further reduces greenhouse gas emissions. The impact of prematurely cutting down trees includes forest degradation, increased carbon emissions, harmful impacts on biodiversity, and financial implications to restore the area.

If tree cutting of any kind is happening in a woodlot, contact the Town of Caledon as soon as possible. Submitting a report after trees have been cut down makes it difficult for By-law officers to get to the area on time and stop the illegal tree cutting.

Personal information is not required, anonymous complaints will be accepted. Call Service Caledon at 905-584-2272 ext. 7750 or email Municipal Law Enforcement: enforcement@caledon.ca.

If illegal tree cutting is happening, the individual(s) will be charged and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. This includes seeking significant fines and restitution orders to replace the illegally cut trees.

To cut down trees, various types of permits are required, along with potentially getting approval from conservation authorities. The Town's Woodland Conservation By-law 2000-100 provides these details: caledon.ca/bylaw.