



Street Department

901 N. Nelson
Spokane, WA 99202

Informational Handouts

Sight Obstructions

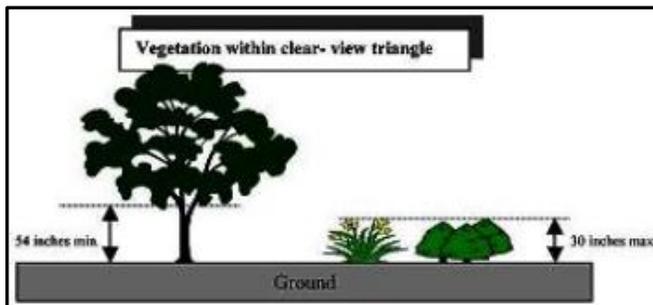
A Way to Make Our Streets Safer



Every year the City of Spokane receives hundreds of complaints about trees, shrubs, fences, and other objects, which either block the vision of drivers at intersections or overhangs the sidewalk impeding pedestrians.

Overgrown vegetation or other obstruction impedes the safe flow of traffic when it blocks our view of traffic signs, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles. If vegetation or other objects are blocking visibility in the street or at an intersection or obscuring a traffic sign, it is your responsibility as the adjacent property owner or resident to trim the vegetation or remove the object.

Street Corners



All intersections must have clear visibility on all corners for pedestrians and vehicles, even if no traffic signs or signals are present. If the City is notified that there might be a visibility problem at your corner, we will contact you as a reminder to keep nearby vegetation trimmed or remove the obstruction. If

the trees and shrubs are not trimmed or the obstruction removed in a timely manner, the City may trim the vegetation or remove the obstruction at your cost.

In addition should a collision occur as the result of an obstruction that you are responsible to maintain, you may be held liable.

At intersections the area between 30 inches and 54 inches above the ground needs to be clear of any obstructions. When measured from the sidewalk level, obstructions must be under 30-inches.

The exact length and depth of the clear area depends upon the type of control at the intersection (traffic signal, stop sign, yield sign, none) and the speed limit of the streets. But in general, property owners need to maintain the area 15 feet from the edge of the intersecting street.

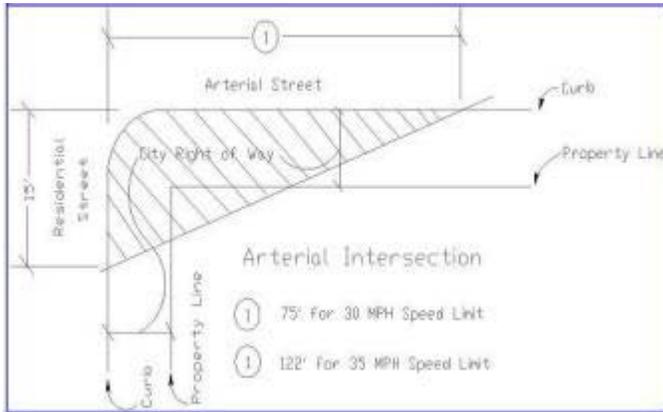
The following diagram shows the City of Spokane minimum visibility standard for an arterial intersection with stop control. The clear visibility triangle for arterials varies with speed.



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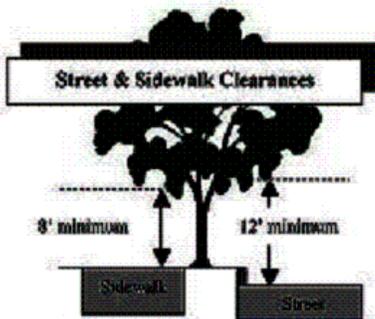
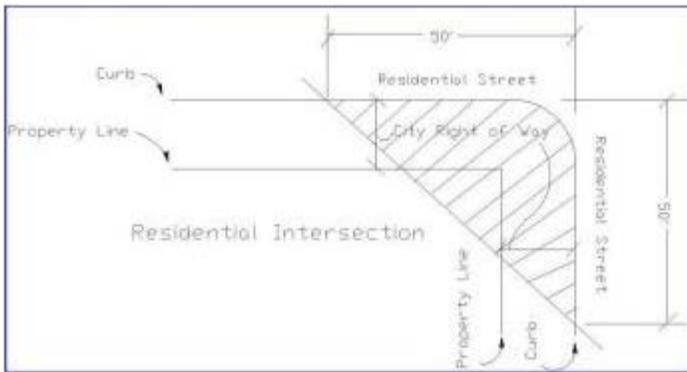
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Arterial Intersection:



For uncontrolled intersections there must be clear visibility within a triangular area formed by measuring 50 feet along the curb lines of both intersecting streets.

Residential Intersection:



Streets and Sidewalk Clearances

Tree limbs over sidewalks and streets must be properly maintained to allow pedestrians to walk on sidewalks and walkway and vehicles to travel on the street without interference. Also shrubs, bushes and other objects should not project into the sidewalk or street travel area. To ensure safe passage for everyone, vegetation needs to be maintained to a minimum of 8 feet overhanging a sidewalk and 12 feet overhanging the roadway.



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Traffic Signs and Signals Visibility Standards

Official traffic control devices (regulatory and warning signs, traffic signals, etc.) must be completely and continuously visible to motorists traveling along a street.

Public Property

The land between the street and private property line is part of the public right-of-way. However, City Codes require the adjacent property owner or resident to maintain this area, including the adjacent sidewalk.

In nearly all cases the offending tree, shrub, fence, etc. is either on private property or was placed on the public right-of-way by the adjacent property owner or resident. It is therefore the property owner or resident responsibility to maintain the area so it does not cause problems.

We try to notify the property owner or resident of the need to correct a problem and give them a reasonable time to make the necessary corrections.

If you have any questions about Sight Obstructions, please contact the City of Spokane, Code Enforcement Division at 509.625.6083.