

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AREA**

**CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**TREE/SHRUB PRUNING**

(Ac.)

**CODE 660**

**DEFINITION**

The removal of all or part of selected branches, leaders or roots from trees and shrubs.

**PURPOSE**

- Improve the quality of wood products.
- Reduce fire and/or safety hazards.
- Improve the growth and vigor of understory plants.
- Improve health and vigor of woody plants e.g. disease, insect and injury management.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

This practice applies on any area with trees or shrubs.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes**

The pruning and shearing method and timing will be specified by species and match the limitations of the site, soils and plants and minimize damage to the residual plant bole/stems and limbs. For a high degree of removal of crown foliage, pruning and shearing shall be done in two or more timed intervals to minimize plant stress.

Debris and vegetative material left on the site after treatment will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose and other management activities. Refer to Woody Residue Treatment (384).

Ground vegetation and/or conditions must be left in a manner to address erosion and other natural resource concerns to acceptable levels.

Disinfect pruning and shearing tools to minimize the spread of pathogens.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Pruning and shearing should be timed to minimize disturbance to seasonal wildlife or pollinator activities.

Review the estimated cost and projected economic benefits of the project before starting a pruning or shearing project.

Branches removed may be used for other products.

Maintain tree and shrub canopy shape where needed for intended production, function and/or operations and maintenance.

Where possible, prune in a manner to improve: the appearance of trees or shrubs (e.g. ornamental plants), aesthetics by maintaining visual buffers or enhancing view planes, and the production of plant products (e.g. nuts, fruits, boughs and tips).

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using the Pacific Islands Area Tree/Shrub Pruning (660) Jobsheet.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Periodically inspect plant condition and do additional pruning if needed.

**REFERENCES**

A New Tree Biology. Shigo and Trees, Associates; 1986.

Care for Your Trees. Univ. of Illinois, Circular 1059. 1972.

Christmas Trees – A Management Guide. Univ. of Nebraska, EC 76-1741. 1976.

Lateral Pruning. Walnut Notes, North Central Forest Experiment Station. 1988.

Pruning Forest Trees. UMC Forestry Guide No. 5160. 1989.

Shaping Pine Christmas Trees for Quality. UMC Forestry Guide No. 5706. 1972.

Growing Pecans. KSU Horticultural Report MF-1025. Kansas State University. 1992

Pruning by Plowing. Missouri Conservationist. February 1990.