

Trimming Mangroves

Loss of mangroves reduces fishery productivity, increases land erosion and decreases nearshore water quality. To protect the environment and prevent these harmful effects, the Mangrove Trimming and Preservation Act regulates trimming and alteration of mangroves.

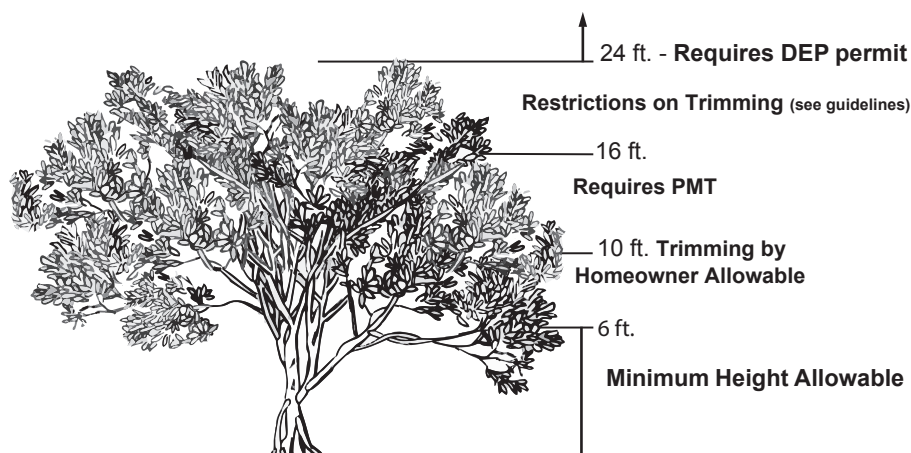
Do I need a permit to trim mangroves on my property?

Florida laws allow property owners to trim mangroves to improve waterfront view or for access to navigable waterways. Trimming is limited to Riparian Mangrove Fringes (RMF) to achieve a final height of no less than 6 feet, as measured from the substrate.

What is a Riparian Mangrove Fringe?

Riparian Mangrove Fringe are areas where mangroves extend less than 50 feet deep. A permit is not required if homeowners follow trimming guidelines. The RMF designation does not apply to areas within certain conservation easements, certain mitigation areas or within certain types of public areas.

Allowable Trimming in RMFs



TRIMMING GUIDELINES

- » Homeowners may trim mangroves when the mangrove height exceeds 6 feet but is not taller than 10 feet. **Mangroves cannot be trimmed to a final height less than 6 feet.**
- » Mangroves over 10 feet tall require a professional mangrove trimmer (PMT).
- » If trimming trees over 16 feet tall, trim in stages with no more than 25 percent removed annually.
- » Trimming mangroves over 24 feet tall requires DEP authorization.
- » Homeowners can trim mangroves that were legally trimmed previously. Trimming must maintain the previous height and configuration.
- » When the property shoreline is greater than 150 feet in length, 65 percent of the mangrove trees can be trimmed.

All other mangrove trimming or alteration activities require a permit

Activities to Avoid

- defoliation (removing all or most of the leaves)
- trimming mangrove roots
- trimming mangroves below 6 feet
- removing mangroves

Will I need a professional mangrove trimmer (PMT)?

Yes, you will need a professional mangrove trimmer:

- If mangroves are taller than 10 feet;
- If trimming under a general permit; or
- If trimming to re-establish historical height and configuration within a Riparian Mangrove Fringe.

What are the penalties for illegal mangrove trimming?

For a first violation, property owners may be required to restore the area. For subsequent violations, property owners and the person performing illegal trimming can be fined:

- Up to \$100 for each mangrove illegally trimmed; and
- Up to \$250 for each mangrove illegally altered.

MORE INFORMATION

Check with local environmental officials before trimming mangroves to find out if you need a permit. A mangrove trimming guide with examples, diagrams and images is available online at:

www.dep.state.fl.us

Search: Mangrove Homeowner Guide

Read the 1996 Mangrove Trimming and Preservation Act at:

www.dep.state.fl.us

Search: Mangrove Trimming and Preservation Act

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wetlands/mangroves
Fort Myers District Office: 239-344-5600
SouthDistrict@dep.state.fl.us

FAST FACTS

Benefits of Mangroves:

- Stabilize the coastline
- Protect water quality
- Reduce coastal flooding
- Provide habitat for fish
- Protect wildlife species
- Provide shelter
- Protect young fish from predators
- Serve as nesting area
- Contribute \$7.6 billion annually to the economy and create 109,000 jobs in Florida

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Use this tool to help determine if trimming the mangroves along your shorelines exempt

