

THE RESIDENTS' GUIDE

*Promoting
community
awareness and
responsibility in
West Vancouver*

westvancouver

UPDATED 2022



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INTRODUCTION



THE RESIDENTS' GUIDE

Community awareness and responsibility in West Vancouver

Whether you are a new resident in West Vancouver, or you have lived here for many years, this guide provides you with good neighbour practices and an overview of common neighbourhood issues intended to enhance residents' enjoyment of their properties and communities, and to keep residents safe.

The purpose of this guide is to raise awareness of rights and responsibilities of property owners, tenants, and users of public spaces such as parks and trails. Understanding the rules and regulations can help prevent problems from the beginning.



Neighbourhood issues do arise, and the District of West Vancouver believes that informal communication with neighbours done in a spirit of cooperation is the best way to address them. When issues persist, residents should contact the appropriate department at the District of West Vancouver to make an enquiry or express a concern.

ON AND AROUND YOUR PROPERTY



SPRINKLING REGULATIONS

From spring to fall, check the sprinkling regulations before watering your lawn. Even-numbered and odd-numbered addresses have designated lawn sprinkling days and hours.

In West Vancouver, water services are fully metered at each property; you pay for what you use.

[Go to *westvancouver.ca/sprinkling* for more information and current restrictions.](https://westvancouver.ca/sprinkling)

UNTIDY PROPERTIES

The *Good Neighbour Bylaw* requires you to be conscious of the outward appearance of your property and its effect on your neighbourhood. You are always responsible for keeping your property maintained, even if you're planning to be away for any period.

- Debris, yard waste, bottles, cans, boxes, household furniture, parts of machinery or automobiles, equipment, and appliances must be kept within a building or structure so they are not visible from another property or public space. All must be stored so they are not visible from outside the property.
- Unlicensed and/or derelict vehicles must be stored inside a garage.



- Building materials are not permitted to accumulate unless an owner can demonstrate that construction or renovation is planned. In that case, materials must be kept in an orderly manner.
- Lawns must be maintained and regularly cut in keeping with the standard of the neighbourhood. Grass, brush, and weeds over 30 centimetres must be cut back.

Bylaw & Licensing Services

604-925-7152 | bylawdept@westvancouver.ca

MAINTAINING STRUCTURES

- Property owners are responsible for maintaining buildings and structures on their property.
- All construction must comply with the BC Building Code and District bylaws and all other enactments and regulations respecting safety.
- A building permit is normally not required for the maintenance of structures, but check with the Building Department before starting any work.

Building Department

604-925-7040 | permits@westvancouver.ca



NOISE CONTROL

Please be considerate and do not create excessive noise that will disturb your neighbours.

The *Noise Control Bylaw* regulates various types of noise and restricts the hours during which excessive noise can be made, so that residents can enjoy peace and quiet during the early mornings, evenings, Sundays and holidays.

To minimize noise, you may consider the following:

- place the noise-generating equipment in a small enclosure
- install a sound dampening fence/shroud
- surround the equipment with dense plants and shrubs



Permitted times for specific noises

CONSTRUCTION:

Monday to Friday | 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Saturday | 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sundays and holidays | *at no time*

POWER TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT:

Monday to Saturday | 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

Sundays and holidays | *at no time*

LAWNMOWERS:

Monday to Saturday | 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Sundays and holidays | 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

LOADING/UNLOADING OF GOODS, MACHINES, EQUIPMENT, OR WASTE:

Monday to Saturday | 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

Sundays and holidays | *at no time*

Bylaw & Licensing Services

604-925-7152 | bylawdept@westvancouver.ca



HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING AND WASTE

Recycling, Green Can, and yard trimmings are collected every week, while garbage is collected every other week.

[Go to *westvancouver.ca/collection* for more information.](https://westvancouver.ca/collection)

Garbage & Recycling

604-925-7176 | westvancollect@westvancouver.ca

MANAGING WILDLIFE

West Vancouver is home to many black bears. Bears that become accustomed to human garbage as a source of food are dangerous and need to be destroyed, making it a matter of life and death for the bear to minimize animal attractants in your garbage and on your property. Our bylaws require that wildlife attractants be managed responsibly in order to minimize human/bear interactions and avoid destroying bears.



Bears and garbage

Garbage is the cause of 80 per cent of interactions between humans and bears on the North Shore. Collection rules, such as set-out times, are included in our bylaw to deter animals and reduce wildlife attractants—it's important to follow them.

- keep garbage and Green Can in your garage, basement or wildlife-secure location during the week
- set materials out after 5 a.m. on collection day, not the night before
- bring materials in by 9 p.m. and store containers in a wildlife-secure place



Other bear attractants

Here are other items that may attract bears to your home, and how to manage them:

- remove bird feeders or make them inaccessible to bears; pick ripe berries and fruit as they ripen; pick up fallen fruit regularly
- feed pets inside your home
- keep your barbecue clean and grease-free and do not leave food unattended
- remove outdoor freezers



- Compost effectively using an equal proportion of “brown” (yard trimmings) with “green” (vegetable and fruit scraps). Be sure to keep a layer of dry “browns” on top, and aerate to accelerate material breakdown.
- put away all petroleum products including; rubber, tar paper, paint, turpentine, kerosene and charcoal fluid—these products attract bears

Go to westvancouver.ca/bears to learn more about bear attractants and how to manage them.

SIDEWALKS AND STREET FRONTS



MAINTAINING YOUR SIDEWALK AND BOULEVARD

- Property owners are responsible for clearing snow from the sidewalks adjacent to their property.
- Property owners are responsible for maintenance of the grass on boulevards adjacent to their property.
- Snow removal can be physically challenging. Be a good neighbour and offer assistance to those who need help removing snow.
- To prevent flooding, avoid clearing leaves into the street where they may block catch basins. Take advantage of municipal yard trimmings collection instead.
- You are responsible for the trimming of plants and trees on your property that are adjacent to sidewalks and roads. This helps maintain sightlines and pedestrian access.

See the regulations on maintaining sidewalks and boulevards in the *Boulevard Bylaw*, section 5.3.



VEHICLE PARKING ON DISTRICT STREETS

When you or your guests park a vehicle on the street, be aware of your neighbours and their ability to access their properties.

- Vehicles are permitted to park for a maximum of six hours adjacent to a property used for residential or commercial purposes, unless the vehicle is registered to that address or signage is present.
- Vehicles are not permitted to park more than 72 hours on District streets.
- Vehicles cannot block driveways, fire hydrants, or solid waste carts placed out for collection, and cannot park within three metres of a driveway, within five metres of a stop sign, or within six metres of a crosswalk.
- A vehicle must have insurance to park on the street.
- Recreation vehicles, trailers, or boats are not permitted to park overnight or for more than six hours on District streets. Additionally, they are not permitted to be parked on District streets from November 1 to March 31.
- Parking cannot be reserved or signed as belonging to a residence or business.

Check the *Traffic & Parking Bylaw* for more information.

RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT



STREAM PROTECTION

Many properties in West Vancouver are near or contain watercourses. Healthy watercourses and their riparian areas are a critical part of our environment and provide important habitat for fish, plants, and animals.

- Any development within 15 metres of the top of a watercourse bank requires an *Environmental Development Permit*. This includes construction, landscaping, tree removal or the pruning of trees with a diameter of 10 centimetres at breast height. Property owners can refer to the District's Official Community Plan Guidelines NE13 if they are planning development near a watercourse.
- Unauthorized activities in watercourses and watercourse setback areas may contravene federal, provincial and municipal legislation.
- Never dispose of any materials, such as paints or cleaning products into household toilets and sinks, or onto outside soil, ditches, storm drains or watercourses.
- During construction projects, keep wet concrete away from all storm drains and watercourses on or near the site.

Go to westvancouver.ca/watercourseprotection for more.



TREE PERMITS

Tree work on private property: A tree permit is required to remove or prune Protected Trees on private property. Protected Trees are defined in the *District's Tree Bylaw*.

Always review the *District's Tree Bylaw* before removing trees from your private property.

Please note that any trees within the 15 metres setback from top of a watercourse bank or within 15 metres of the high-tide mark of the ocean are also Protected Trees. Tree work in these areas require either an *Environmental Development Permit* or *Foreshore Development Permit*.

Tree work on public property: A *Municipal Tree Permit* or *Public Lands Tree Cutting Permit* may be required before any tree work can be done on boulevards, public lands, parks, or covenanted areas. Only tree contractors approved for work on District of West Vancouver property can complete tree work on public property. Obtaining neighbourhood consent may be required before your work can be approved.

[Go to westvancouver.ca/trees](https://westvancouver.ca/trees) for more on tree cutting permits.



FIRE PITS AND OTHER PROHIBITED DEVICES

Fire prevention is a year-round responsibility for all community members. Please take proper safety precautions when barbecuing and be sure to review the list of prohibited devices.

The following are not allowed in West Vancouver due to the risk of a spreading fire:

- beach/park fires
- outdoor pizza ovens
- outdoor fireplaces
- firebowls
- fire pits
- outdoor chimineas

In the case of emergency, call 9-1-1. For non-emergency issues, contact Fire & Rescue Services at 604-925-7370.



The District of West Vancouver is a FireSmart Community. This program is designed to encourage local, self-organized groups of neighbours to implement solutions for wildfire safety by engaging and supporting homeowners, community leaders and others in shared efforts to protect people and property from wildfire.

westvancouver.ca/FireSmart

RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP



DOG LICENSING

- All dogs over the age of six months must be licensed.
- No more than three dogs are allowed in any home, and no more than six cats.
- Wearing a licence tag helps your lost dog be identified.
- Dogs must wear a licence tag when not on their owner's property.
- Licences are valid for one calendar year. Licence renewal notices are mailed in December for the following year.

[Go to *westvancouver.ca/dogs* for more details.](https://westvancouver.ca/dogs)

BACKYARD CHICKENS

Backyard chickens are permitted in single family residential zones in West Vancouver.

[Go to *westvancouver.ca/chickens* for more details.](https://westvancouver.ca/chickens)



NUISANCES

- As good neighbours, pet owners must pick up and properly dispose of their animal's waste.
- Pet owners must ensure that their animals do not disturb neighbours by barking or howling.

LOST PETS

- If your pet has gone missing, or if you are in possession of a missing pet, call Bylaw & Licensing Services at 604-925-7152.
- Lost pets that cannot be immediately reunited with their owners are taken to the BC SPCA West Vancouver branch located at 1020 Pound Road in Ambleside Park. They can be contacted at 604-922-4622.
- A dog's licence is its ticket home. Ensure your contact information is up to date with the District.



PETS IN PUBLIC PLACES

- Animals are regulated under the *Animal Control & License Bylaw*.
- All dogs must be leashed when in public spaces. West Vancouver has designated off-leash areas.
- You are responsible for controlling your dog at all times.
- Keep pets away from streams. Animal waste is polluting and harmful to wildlife and the environment. Pets entering streams can erode stream banks, cause siltation and disturb wildlife.
- Dogs are prohibited on school grounds, playgrounds, sports fields, beaches and other areas with posted signs.
- Dogs cannot be left unattended while tethered or tied on public or private property.
- Don't leave pets unattended in your vehicle unless there is suitable ventilation and water, and weather conditions are appropriate.

Bylaw Services & Licensing

604-925-7152 | bylawdept@westvancouver.ca



HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

- A business licence is required for all home-based businesses.
- Some business types are not permitted as a home-based business.
- Before setting up a home-based business, you must confirm with the District if the *Zoning Bylaw* permits one in your area.
- Your home-based business must comply with regulations outlined in the *Zoning Bylaw*, section 130.5. This includes having only one client visit the home business at any time.
- Consider your neighbours when you have guests or customers visiting your home-based business. Provide parking for them off the street.

Bylaw Services & Licensing

604-925-7152 | bylawdept@westvancouver.ca

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING PERMITS



BUILDING PERMITS

West Vancouver's Permits & Inspections Department provides information and approvals for new developments and building permits.

You need a building permit for the following:

- demolishing a house, garage, carport, accessory building
- renovations
- building a new house, garage, or carport
- adding on to or altering an existing house
- adding a secondary suite
- installing a swimming pool
- building a retaining wall 1.2 metres (4 feet) or higher, or when building a series of retaining walls
- building a shed or accessory building

Please consult the Permits & Inspections Department if you are unsure. (604-925-7040 or email: permits@westvancouver.ca)



Designing your new home or addition to an existing home

When designing your new home or an addition to your existing home, take a close look at your neighbourhood and street. There are many design choices that directly impact your neighbours, such as parking, fences, view corridors and retaining walls. Being a good neighbour means considering how your decisions will affect the livability and enjoyment of your neighbour's property.

Ask yourself these questions early in the design process:

- How will my new house fit in with the houses on my street?
- How will my design affect my neighbours?
- Will my home reduce the livability of my neighbour's home?
- Have I considered my neighbour's view?
- Where are my neighbour's windows and how does my window design affect their privacy?
- Will cutting down tree(s) on my property impact my neighbour's property?
- Are there any restrictions on my title that affect my house and property design plans (e.g. rights of way, easements, covenants)?



The District encourages residents to engage in conversations with their neighbours about any outwardly visible construction plans before they are finalized. This helps avoid potential conflicts between neighbours, and results in better building design.

DEMOLISHING BUILDINGS

Demolition of an existing home is usually the first step in building a new one. You can reduce the inconvenience to your neighbours by:

- working within the hours of construction (Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.) as outlined in the *Noise Control Bylaw*, section 6.1
- securing your demolition with perimeter fencing and ensure dust control measures are in place
- stacking and piling material neatly—demolition and construction sites are subject to the *Good Neighbour Bylaw*, section 5.1.4
- building material is only allowed to be accumulated on a private property if there is a building permit for that property

[Go to westvancouver.ca/building](https://westvancouver.ca/building) for details on demolitions.



CONSTRUCTING ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Accessory buildings can affect views and sunlight for your neighbours. Consider the following when constructing an accessory building:

- A building permit is required for most accessory buildings, such as a detached garage, a carport, a tool shed or pool house.
- Accessory buildings and structures over 1.2 metres (4 feet) in height are not permitted in the front or side yard setback areas.
- The maximum size of an accessory building on your property can be found under the property's specific zoning regulations in the *Zoning Bylaw*, section 130.01, 130.08 and section 200.
- All accessory buildings, regardless of size, must meet the setback requirements listed in the *Zoning Bylaw*, section 130.01.



DECKS

Consider your neighbours' privacy when designing a new deck:

- A building permit is required for a deck that is more than 0.6 metres (2 feet) above the ground, or if the deck is attached to a building.
- A deck requiring a building permit must meet the setbacks for the structure to which it is attached, as outlined in the Zoning Bylaw, section 200.

SUITES

Secondary suites and coach houses are a good rental housing option and are permitted in the District. Both require building permits and must comply with the *Zoning Bylaw*, section 130, and the BC Building Code. If you have a secondary suite or coach house and wish to rent it out, you need a business licence. A coach house (detached secondary suite) needs to be considered under a development permit (unless it is for a coach house that is one storey without a basement and meets all the requirements of the *Zoning Bylaw*) before you apply for a building permit. The RS6 zone (Eagle Island) does not permit coach houses or suites.



FENCES

A fence can significantly impact neighbouring properties depending on its location, height and materials used. A good neighbour considers the potential impact and talks to neighbours before constructing a new fence.

Fences must be located entirely on your property line. Before building, you must confirm the location of the property lines. Contact the Building Department; it has copies of legal surveys for newer homes. Older homes may not be on file, in which case you need to hire a professional surveyor to determine the location of your property lines.

- The maximum height of a fence in most residential zones is 1.8 metres within a front yard and 2.4 metres at all other locations on the site. Exceptions are homes in the Ambleside, Dundarave and Horseshoe Bay areas which have a maximum fence height of 1.2 metres within a front yard and 1.8 metres at all other locations. Refer to the *Zoning Bylaw*, section 130.17 for details.



- In most cases, a permit is not required for a fence. However, a swimming pool must be surrounded by a fence a minimum of 1.22 metres (4 feet) in height. Refer to the *Building Bylaw* for details.
- Call 1-800-474-6886 before digging on your property to avoid buried cables, conduits or gas lines.
- Property owners must keep their fences in good condition as per the *Good Neighbour Bylaw*, section 5.2.2(f).



RETAINING WALLS

- A building permit is required for all retaining walls 1.2 metres (4 feet) or higher, or when building a series of retaining walls. Retaining walls cannot encroach onto any right-of-way or easement. Retaining walls must be constructed entirely within your property line.
- If a retaining wall exists on your property, you are responsible for its maintenance and repair.
- Further regulations for retaining walls can be found in the *Zoning Bylaw*, section 120.22.

**Permits & Inspections Department | westvancouver.ca/building
604-925-7040 | permits@westvancouver.ca**



YOUR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

The North Shore is comprised of three municipalities and two First Nations. West Vancouver is a member municipality of Metro Vancouver, the governing body of the Metro Vancouver Regional District.

A mayor and six councillors make up the elected decision-making body for the District.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes are posted online at [westvancouver.ca/agenda](https://www.westvancouver.ca/agenda).

Visit [westvancouver.ca/council-meetings](https://www.westvancouver.ca/council-meetings) for more information on attending a Council meeting.

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK WITH MAYOR & COUNCIL

Council welcomes your input!

Visit [westvancouver.ca/correspondence](https://www.westvancouver.ca/correspondence) for information about how to communicate with Council by email.



CONTACT US

MUNICIPAL HALL

750 17th Street
West Vancouver BC V7V 3T3
604-925-7000
info@westvancouver.ca
westvancouver.ca

BYLAW & LICENSING SERVICES

604-925-7152
bylawdept@westvancouver.ca

PERMITS & INSPECTIONS

604-925-7040
permits@westvancouver.ca

FIRE & RESCUE

non-emergency: 604-925-7370
emergency: 9-1-1
firedepartment@westvancouver.ca

POLICE

non-emergency: 604-925-7300
emergency: 9-1-1
info@wvvpd.ca

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

604-925-7008
nroizman@westvancouver.ca

REPORT A PROBLEM:

PUBLIC WORKS DISPATCH

604-925-7100 (24-hour line)
dispatch@westvancouver.ca
westvancouver.ca/request-service

NOTES



This is important municipal information. Please have someone translate.

Ceci est un avis important de votre municipalité. Veuillez vous le faire traduire.

這份市政通告很重要，請找人翻譯。

이것은 시청에서 보내는 중요한 통지입니다. 다른 사람에게 번역을 부탁하여 읽으십시오.

این یک اطلاعیه مهم شهری است. لطفاً از کسی بخواهید که آنرا ترجمه کند.

westvancouver.ca