

St. Pete Beach Dune Vegetation Trimming Guidelines

Florida's Gulf Coast beaches are home to the third largest gathering of Loggerhead turtles in the world. Dune vegetation protects nesting grounds.

Our dunes also provide essential habitat for many species of native coastal vegetation. They are the first line of defense against storms and are a buffer from high tides, winds, and waves. Areas with little dune vegetation are more likely to experience storm damage.

Unregulated trimming places turtles, beaches, and vegetation in jeopardy.



City of St. Pete Beach
155 Corey Avenue
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706
Phone: 727-367-2735

Native Dune Plants

The following plants are included in St. Pete Beach's rules on dune plant trimming:

- Sabal Palm
- Sea Grapes
- Sea Oats
- Beach Dune Sunflower
- Blanket Flower
- Railroad Vine
- Beach Verbena
- Cocoplum
- Saw Palmetto
- Scavoela "Inkberry"
- Coralbean
- Hercules Club
- Myrsine
- Wild Lime
- Florida Privet
- Necklace Pod
- Bay Cedar
- Gaillardia

For more information about native plants in the Pinellas County, go to: <https://pinellas.fnpschapters.org/native-plants/>

Approval of a "Beach Dune Vegetation Trimming Permit" is required by property owners prior to the alteration of any dune vegetation.

Native vegetation helps to protect and build beaches and dunes. The roots of plants slow sand erosion while leaves, limbs and stalks collect sand.

For more information on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Beach Dune Trimming Guidelines, contact:

The Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us>

For more information about Pinellas County Environmental Management and Dune Restoration, contact:

Environmental Management
22211 US 19 N., Bldg. 10
Clearwater, FL 33765
(727) 464-4425

St. Pete Beach Land Development Code can be found here: https://library.municode.com/fl/st._pete_beach/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=CO_DIV25COPR_CO_S25.3EX

Trimming Impacts Everyone

Reckless trimming can endanger wildlife, leave dunes unprotected against winds and erosion, and kill vegetation. The State of Florida, Pinellas County, and municipal protections were created to protect our resources.

Dune Vegetation Trimming Guidelines:

- ◆ Permits are required. No trimming shall occur until all permits have been issued. A copy of the permit application and additional information can be downloaded at: <https://www.spbrec.com/383/Permits-Applications>

Approval of a Florida Department of Environmental Protection Permit does not supersede SPB Dune Trimming permitting requirements.

- ◆ The removal or destruction of beach dune vegetation, due to improper trimming is a violation of Section 6.00.00 of the Land Development Code and Sections 161.053 and 161.054 of the Florida Statute. Violations of

Florida Statute are a second-degree misdemeanor and punishable by fines up to \$500 and \$10,000 a day, respectively.

- ◆ Only plants greater than six feet (6') in height are permitted to be trimmed. No plant shall be cut to a height less than six feet (6') in height.

- ◆ A maximum of one-third of the plant height or foliage surface area is permitted to be trimmed in a year. Trimming is allowed two times per year provided that no more than one-third of the plant height or foliage surface area is removed in that year.

- ◆ Dead leaves and limbs protect sensitive understory plants and new growth from salt spray and shall not be removed unless a safety hazard.

- ◆ Trimming is only permitted between Mar 1st - Oct 1st.

- ◆ Trimming that will result in a lighting violation of Sea Turtle Protection Regulations is strictly prohibited. Marine turtle mortality resulting from increased

illumination may be considered a violation of Chapter 370.12 FS, and the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 and may subject the responsible party to prosecution by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with fines up to \$10,000.

Removing Non-Native Vegetation

Non-native plant removal is encouraged and may be done throughout the year. When removal exposes bare sand, native vegetation must be planted in its absence.

- ◆ The project must comply with all Federal and/or State permitting requirements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inquire and apply for additional permits, as needed.

- ◆ Native vegetation restoration shall commence within one week of non-native vegetation removal.