

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TREE TRIMMING & REMOVAL PROTOCOLS

### In Accordance with London's Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy

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#### ✓ London's Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy

- ✓ The Conflict –  
Cutting trees displaces wildlife,  
especially nests with babies



- ✓ The Solution –  
Humane protocols for tree trimming/cutting

- ✓ What AWAC can do

### London's Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy

- Upholds high standards of animal welfare
- Requires all reasonable efforts to avoid displacing, injuring or killing wild animals
- Requires operational protocols



### The Problem:

When trees are trimmed or removed ...




... mammals and birds may lose their homes or lives.



This baby squirrel lost his home when a tree was cut down.

Young mammals are unable to regulate their body temperature.

Without care this "pinkie" would rapidly become hypothermic and die.



This raccoon family nest was damaged when the tree was cut down.

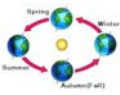




**It's a local problem ...**

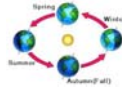
- There are no protocols or instructions in the work description to mandate that tree trimmers hired by the city do this job humanely.
- The outcome for displaced animals relies largely on luck. Crews hired to work on trees vary:
  - extreme care and kindness – relocate nest, take animal to rehab centre
  - misguided good intentions – leave babies to die of hypothermia
  - cruelty – toss nest in the wood chipper
- Volunteers are overwhelmed.
  - ❖ By the number of animals displaced:
    - Salthaven took in 67 baby squirrels in 2013
    - That same year, Another Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre took in 40 squirrels in the Spring and 83 squirrels in the Fall
  - ❖ And the amount of work:
    - Baby squirrels must be kept warm, stimulated, fed and cleaned every 2 – 3 hours.

**The Solution:**

1. Think about the time of year - avoid cutting trees in birthing and hibernation seasons
2. Inspect for evidence of animal use
3. Follow specific instructions when adult or juvenile animals are present

### 1. Avoid birthing/hibernation seasons.



- No removal of nesting limbs or trunk in January or February
  - Exception – tree is an immediate health or safety hazard
  - Try to remove dangerous limb only
  - Take animals to wildlife rehab facility
- Use extra caution when babies are most vulnerable
  - Squirrels are born Jan/Feb and July/August
  - Birds nest March - August
  - Raccoons are born March - June

These five orphaned baby squirrels were cut out of a tree in late January.



### 2. Inspect for evidence of animal use.



- Trees to be cut down or trimmed are inspected – include inspection for wildlife and give this information to crew assigned to tree trimming or removal.
- Crew inspects again when they arrive at the site. If animals are present, move on to next tree.
- If tree is a safety risk, trim around nest. Wait at least 3 days to allow animal time to move the nest. Re-check to ensure animals are gone before any work begins.

Give Mom time to move her baby.



### 3. Follow protocols when animals are present.



- If a bird nest must be moved, entire branch should be fastened to adjacent tree. Unhatched eggs should not be moved.
- Baby birds or squirrels that are displaced out of a nest can be re-nested nearby if they are still warm. A wildlife rehabilitation centre should be contacted if babies are injured, cold or unable to be re-nested.
- Nesting boxes provide immediate shelter for displaced wildlife. Heating disks keep babies warm.

Nesting box has sides and open top. A berry basket is one example.



### Scope of proposed protocols:

- All trees on land the city owns or controls
- City contracts for any tree trimming or removal



### What AWAC can do:

Recommend City Council adopt wildlife-friendly protocols before trimming or removing another tree!



## Humane Protocols

1. Observe sensitive timing windows – avoid birthing and hibernation seasons
2. Inspect tree for animals as part of regular inspection
3. Pre-stress tree to encourage animals to move
4. Relocate nest to nearby tree or nesting box, any injured animals to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator  
[ontariowildliferescue.org](http://ontariowildliferescue.org)

