



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## MUNICIPAL FOREST COMMISSIONS

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You asked (1) for a summary of the duties and responsibilities of municipal forest commissions and their members and (2) whether the law limits the activities allowed in municipal forests.

Towns, cities, or boroughs that establish municipal forests must appoint three-member forest commissions to manage and care for them. A municipality's legislative body appoints the commission members, who serve three-year, staggered terms and do not receive compensation for their service. (The first appointees serve staggered terms of one, two, and three years.) The commission members must appoint a chairman and annually report to the municipality and State Forester.

In addition to overseeing municipal forests, a municipality's legislative body may vote to require a forest commission to (1) supervise public shade trees within the municipality that are not under the state Department of Transportation commissioner's supervision, (2) appoint the town tree warden, and (3) supervise the tree warden's work. (OLR Report [2007-R-0551](#) provides further information on the powers and duties of municipal tree wardens.)

The law allows towns, cities, and boroughs to establish municipal forests to (1) raise timber, (2) protect water supplies, (3) provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, or (4) employ relief labor ([CGS § 7-131](#)). It does not place any other specific limitations on activities conducted in municipal forests.

RP:ts