

For Official Release
PR 001-11282023
Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
November 28, 2023



Ensuring Road Safety: The Purposeful Tree Removal at Maugaoalii by the Department of Public Works

The recent removal of some trees at Maugaoalii was undertaken by the Department of Public Works with the assistance of local contractor equipment. The work was performed on the Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Day holidays to avoid heavy traffic on the weekdays.

Trees near roads can pose particular safety risks, especially during severe weather conditions. Falling trees or branches can block the road, causing accidents or impeding emergency services. Selectively removing them reduces the chances of such incidents.

There have been incidents in the past where vehicles have been struck by trees or falling rocks. Unfortunately, these incidents can even be fatal. There was a recent incident at Maugaoalii where a member of the community's vehicle was struck by a falling tree. Fortunately, in that incident, no loss of life occurred. As public safety is a priority for the administration, these incidents are taken seriously.

DPW collaborated with other ASG agencies to assess the situation at Maugaoalii and determined that this work was necessary. While trees generally add to the stability of slopes, in some cases, the removal of trees on slopes may be necessary to mitigate the risk of landslides. It is important to note that each situation is unique, and decisions regarding tree removal at this site were carefully considered. The clearing of these trees from the slope also allows for better road maintenance activities, according to DPW. It provides access to road workers and equipment, making it easier to repair or repave the road, install safety barriers, or improve visibility for drivers.

DPW has been responding to rockfalls, landslides, tree falls, and all sorts of incidents such as this for years. ASG relies on these experienced professionals who work day and night when these events occur. The work that is conducted by DPW maintenance crew and their leaders is vital for the safety of the traveling public.

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