



Photo by Allison Chop



Photo by Denise Mascari



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### **Rule 16.1 - Abnormal Course Conditions & Local Rule E-10 - STAKED TREES**

Video:

[SGC Local Rule - Staked Tree - Bing video](#)

[How to Take Relief from a Staked Tree at Burstwick - Bing video](#)

### **SCENARIO**

Recently a player found her ball near one of the lovely staked trees all wrapped in orange fencing on Hole #18. How should she proceed? Does she get free relief?

Trees **are not** obstructions because only artificial things are obstructions (e.g., irrigation boxes, sprinkler heads, golf cart paths). **However**, the stakes and that "lovely plastic orange protective fencing" around the trees are obstructions, and the local rule E-10 applies.

Free relief can and should\* be taken from the stakes or fencing only if it interferes with the player's stance or swing (**NOT if an unstaked tree interferes**). Relief is taken by finding the nearest point of relief no nearer the hole, and dropping the ball within 1 club length.

It should also be noted the nearest point of relief is just that - nearest point of relief. Not nearest point of relief where you have an unobstructed next shot. Nearest point of relief may put you in a place that you do not have a clear shot, and maybe free relief is not the best option.

You do have a second option, and that is to take an "unplayable lie" with a one stroke penalty. See rule #19.

\*to protect our trees please take the free relief