Trees Need Care

Urban & Community Forestry programs ensure more livable communities through the care and management of trees. Neglect and urban stress limit the life span of the average downtown tree to only ten years. With proper care, trees live longer, look better, and increase in value as they age. Without care, they decline in health and value and become liabilities. Trees deserve to be managed with the same skill and diligence as any other community asset.

Ways You Can Help

- If there is no organized effort to care for public trees in your community, offer to help start the process.
- Apply for grants to improve and manage your local urban or community forest.
- Organize a group of volunteers to plant and care for local trees.
- Participate in workshops and other educational opportunities.
- Celebrate Arbor Day, which is observed annually in New Jersey on the last Friday of April.
- Contact the NJ Urban & Community Forestry program for help in getting started.

Environmental and Economic Benefits of Trees

Studies show that trees and forests are valuable resources and worthy investments.

Improve neighborhood appeal
Trees attract businesses, shoppers and homeowners.

Increase property value
Homes with trees sell 4-6 weeks faster and for 20% more.

Increase sales
People shop longer and will pay 20% more for an item in a treed shopping center.

Cool cities and towns in the summer
Trees reduce heat generated by hard surfaces by about 12 degrees.

Save on utility costs
Three properly placed shade trees save an average household up to $250 annually in energy costs.

Purify the air
Trees absorb CO2 and filter particulates.

Mitigate stormwater
Trees absorb water, which prevents sewer overflow and saves communities millions of dollars in water treatment costs.

Protect roads
Trees shade roads, reducing road maintenance costs by 50% and helping roads last 20-30 years longer due to canopy coverage.

Improve student performance
In schools that have trees on or near the property, students can score higher on report cards and can be more attentive in class.

Keep neighborhoods safe
Treed communities have a reduced level of domestic violence and foster safer, more sociable neighborhood environments.

photo credit: J. Franzini, New Jersey Tree Foundation, Camden Urban Promise Rain Garden

Support Urban & Community Forestry in New Jersey

Purchase the "Treasure Our Trees" license plates for your passenger and commercial vehicles. These plates show that you care about trees in New Jersey.

Proceeds from the "Treasure Our Trees" plates fund Urban & Community Forestry activities statewide.

The one-time fee and yearly renewal are tax deductible.

Call 1-888-486-3339
or visit www.TreasureOurTrees.nj.gov

Partners & Resources

NJ Community Forest Council
NJ Tree Foundation - *www.njtreefoundation.org*
NJ Shade Tree Federation - *www.njstf.org*
Rutgers Urban Forestry Program of NJAES - *www.urbanforestry.rutgers.edu*
USDA Forest Service - *www.na.fs.fed.us/urban/*

For questions or more information

NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry
NJ Forest Service
Urban & Community Forestry Program
www.communityforestry.nj.gov
(609) 292-2532

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Urban & Community Forestry in New Jersey

To encourage and support the stewardship and effective management of trees and forest ecosystems in New Jersey communities

State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
NJ Forest Service

Philip D. Murphy, Governor
Sheila Y. Oliver, Lt. Governor
Shawn LaTourette, Acting DEP Commissioner

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What is Urban & Community Forestry?

Urban forestry is the art, science and technology of managing trees and forest resources in and around urban community ecosystems for the physiological, sociological, economic and aesthetic benefits trees provide society.

The urban forest is all of the trees and other vegetation in and around our cities and towns. It includes trees in home landscapes, schoolyards, parks and greenbelts, utility rights-of-way and cemeteries. It also includes trees along streets and streams and anywhere else that trees can grow in and around a community.

A community forest is a forest owned and generally managed by a community such as a village, town, tribal authority or local government, the members of which share its benefits.

The urban forest is a complex ecological network that combines the natural and built environments. Shrubs, wildflowers, ground covers and wildlife are elements of the urban & community forest. Streets, buildings, utilities, soil, water, and most importantly – people, are part of the urban and community forest.

We plant and care for trees not just for ourselves, *but for future generations.*

New Jersey Urban & Community Forestry Program (NJUCF)

To RECEIVE accreditation *(approved status)* **by the NJUCF, a local government must satisfy these requirements:**

1. **Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP)**
   - A five-year CFMP must be prepared according to NJUCF guidelines and approved by the State Forester.
2. **Training and Education**
   - At least two representatives *(one municipal employee and one volunteer)*, active in the local Urban & Community Forestry program and the care of its tree resource must complete CORE training.
3. **An Annual Accomplishment Report** consistent with NJUCF forms and format, must be submitted annually by February 15.

Additional details about these requirements can be found at the NJUCF website at *www.communityforestry.nj.gov*

To MAINTAIN accreditation *(approved status)* **by the NJUCF, a local government must satisfy these requirements each year:**

1. **Community Forestry Management Plan**
   - An approved five-year CFMP must be in place; an expired plan will not count toward accreditation.
2. **Training and Education**
   - CORE training requirement must be maintained. If a CORE trained representative is no longer active in the local Urban & Community Forestry program another representative must be trained to fill the vacancy.
   - Eight or more continuing education units (CEUs) must be earned by at least two individuals annually.
3. **An Annual Accomplishment Report** consistent with NJUCF forms and format, must be submitted annually by February 15.

Additional details about these requirements can be found at the NJUCF website at *www.communityforestry.nj.gov*

Benefits of having a NJUCF accredited Urban & Community Forestry Program

Grants - NJUCF provides grants for the development and implementation of Urban & Community Forestry Management plans.

Liability - A basis for local governments to reduce or eliminate liability associated with local tree care programs and shade tree commissions.

A healthy, safe and resilient urban and community forest can provide environmental, economic and social benefits now and for generations to come.

Outcomes of an Effective Urban & Community Forestry Program

- Accredited by the State's Urban & Community Forestry Program.
- Established a Shade Tree Commission or tree board by ordinance.
- Employs or retains an arborist, forester or other professional in a related field.
- Develops tree ordinances that provide for the overall care of the Urban & Community Forest.
- Is recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City USA. *www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/*
- Established a tree budget *($2 per capita minimum is required to qualify as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation)* and brings in funding through grants and other sources to support all the work involved in a comprehensive program.
- Provides outreach and education about trees and forests for all who live, work, play and learn in the community.
- Engages local government leadership, employees, and community volunteers in the stewardship of the urban & community forest.
- Abides by arboricultural industry standards and forestry best management practices.
- Advocates for the conservation of the urban forest and all of the benefits that a healthy urban forest provides.