



# URBAN TREES

Urban trees are trees located in developed areas including cities and towns. Urban trees may be found along sidewalks, in parking lots, throughout a park, on homeowner properties and other public spaces like schools.

Urban trees form a tree canopy whose branches and leaves create an umbrella-like effect above the impervious surfaces associated with urban areas<sup>1</sup>.

## BENEFITS

- **Improved Water Quality & Stormwater Reduction:** Trees reduce the potential negative impacts of surface water runoff, like soil erosion, by intercepting and holding large volumes of precipitation and slowing the speed of runoff on the ground.
- **Energy Savings:** Deciduous trees provide cooling shade that can reduce utility bills in the summer, and strategically placed evergreens can buffer winter wind.
- **Wildlife Habitat:** Native trees provide important food and habitat for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife.
- **Property Value:** Planting trees can lead to higher property values<sup>2</sup>.



## QUICK FACTS

ONE MATURE TREE HAS THE SAME COOLING EFFECT AS 10 ROOM-SIZED AIR CONDITIONERS<sup>3</sup>



ROADSIDE TREES REDUCE NEARBY INDOOR AIR POLLUTION BY MORE THAN 50%<sup>6</sup>

A SINGLE, MATURE DECIDUOUS TREE CAN INTERCEPT 500-760 GALLONS OF RAINFALL PER YEAR<sup>4</sup>



# PLANTING & MAINTENANCE

Give your trees a good start. Planting a tree is more than digging a hole. Before planting a tree, consider how the tree(s) will be maintained and who will maintain it for the life of the tree.

## 1 RIGHT TREE, RIGHT PLACE



Choose a tree that is native to your region and is suitable to the site's type of soil, amount of shade, and space available.

## 2 PLANT AT THE RIGHT TIME



The best time of year to plant trees is in the fall or early spring.

## 3 PLANT FOR SUCCESS



Watch this video about how to properly plant a tree.

***You'll want to care for your new trees, especially within the first two years after planting. Maintenance is an important aspect of tree survival and can ensure a healthy, long lived tree.***

## MAINTENANCE DOS & DON'TS

- **Water:** Provide water to the tree's root system once a week after the initial planting and especially during the hot dry summer periods. Short frequent watering discourages roots from spreading out, so when watering it is important to provide plenty of water and allow it to fully soak into the ground.
- **Mulch:** Replace mulch as needed and eliminate the weed competition. Mulch around young trees helps retain soil moisture, prevent soil erosion, reduce pressures from invasives, and more.<sup>5</sup> Be sure to keep mulch at least 2 inches away from the base of the tree. **Your mulch layer should resemble a donut, not a volcano.**
- **Protection:** deer, vole, and other **critter protection**, if needed.
- **Pruning:** Prune as needed to encourage proper form.



Gator bag on a dogwood tree at the front of Dogwood Middle School in Richmond, VA. Gator bags help newly planted trees take root by slowly releasing water into the soil.



## SOURCES

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2. University of Nebraska-Lincoln: [news.unl.edu/article/study-trees-have-315-billion-impact-on-home-values-each-year](http://news.unl.edu/article/study-trees-have-315-billion-impact-on-home-values-each-year)
3. CityGreen: [citygreen.com/key-facts-on-urban-forests/](http://citygreen.com/key-facts-on-urban-forests/)
4. Penn State Extension: [extension.psu.edu/the-role-of-trees-and-forests-in-healthy-watersheds](http://extension.psu.edu/the-role-of-trees-and-forests-in-healthy-watersheds)
5. University of Maryland Extension: [extension.umd.edu/resource/mulching-trees-and-shrubs/](http://extension.umd.edu/resource/mulching-trees-and-shrubs/)
6. Arbor Day Foundation: [arborday.org/value](http://arborday.org/value)

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