



Trees Please! 2007

In the second year of *Trees Please* residents donated enough funds to plant 14 new trees! After East Hills made several unsuccessful attempts to secure grant funding to expand the program, Carol Moore stepped up to the plate and raised the necessary funds. Carol's tireless effort to plant and preserve trees had her knocking on doors and asking for dollars; scouting and staking planting locations; and even sitting in jail.

This summer Carol couldn't stand by idly and watch, mature, "heritage trees" be cut down to make way for new development. Carol ran home and rounded up a chain and returned to the site to chain herself to a fallen tree, in the path of other trees waiting to be cut down. Carol was arrested and jailed for her efforts. While Carol's arrest made some news her efforts in actually planting and maintaining trees continued in the background.

Over the past two years *Trees Please* has put 43 new trees in the ground including watering and maintaining them. The next step is to conduct a neighborhood wide tree survey to determine the condition of the Urban Forest here in East Hills and to set up a maintenance plan to treat and maintain healthy Ash Trees threatened by the Emerald Ash Borer. As always understanding the value of trees and continuing to educate residents on tree care and maintenance is of tantamount importance. If you want to get involved, call KC at our office, or simply water the trees on your property. Drought conditions and the urban environment take big tolls on our trees and helping them out can be as simple as giving them a drink of water!

The series of photos on the left and the next page were taken by a neighbor to document the fallen trees and Carol's effort to stop the cutting.





For Newly Planted Trees:

Keep the soil moist but not soaked; over watering can cause problems too. Water trees at least once a week, barring rain, and more frequently during hot weather. New trees need on average one inch of water per week for the first two years. When the soil is dry below the surface of the mulch, it is time to water. Continue until mid-fall, tapering off for lower temperatures that require less-frequent watering.

Other follow-up care may include minor pruning of branches damaged during the planting process. Prune sparingly immediately after planting and wait to begin necessary corrective pruning until after a full season of growth in the new location.

For Established Trees:

Tree Inspection is an evaluation tool to call attention to any change in the tree's health before the problem becomes too serious. By providing regular inspections of mature trees at least once a year, you can prevent or reduce the severity of future disease, insect, and environmental problems. During tree inspection, be sure to examine four characteristics of tree vigor: new leaves or buds, leaf size, twig growth, and absence of crown dieback, the gradual death of the upper part of the tree.

Mulching can reduce environmental stress by providing trees with a stable root environment that is cooler and contains more moisture than the surrounding soil. Mulch can also prevent mechanical damage by keeping machines such as lawn mowers and string trimmers away from the tree's base. Further, mulch reduces competition from surrounding weeds and turf. When placing mulch, care should be taken **not to cover the actual trunk of the tree**. This mulch-free area, 1 to 2 inches wide at the base, is sufficient to avoid moist bark conditions and prevent trunk decay.

Fertilization is another important aspect of mature tree care. Trees require certain nutrients (essential elements) to function and grow. Urban landscape trees can be growing in soils that do not contain sufficient available nutrients for satisfactory growth and development. In these situations, it may be necessary to fertilize to improve plant vigor.

Pruning is the most common tree maintenance procedure next to watering. Pruning is often desirable or necessary to remove dead, diseased, or insect-infested branches and to improve tree structure, enhance vigor, or maintain safety. Because each cut has the potential to change the growth of, or cause damage to, a tree, no branch should be removed without a reason.

The easiest and most effective action you can take right now is to
WATER YOUR TREES!

Water the trees in your yard and water the trees on the parkway and
even water your neighbor's trees!



What is all the fuss about trees?

Trees are major capital assets in cities across the United States. Just as streets, sidewalks, public buildings and recreational facilities are a part of a community's infrastructure, so are publicly owned trees. Trees -- and, collectively, the urban forest -- are important assets that require care and maintenance the same as other public property.

Trees are on the job 24 hours every day working for all of us to improve our environment and quality of life. Trees are vital to the livability and future prosperity of our city. Trees are not just pretty objects they also serve our city in a wide variety of ways. Urban forests make important contributions to society. They have environmental, social, aesthetic, and economic values. In general, the health and quality of urban forests and street trees indicates the health of neighborhoods and other urban areas.

- Trees act as "lungs" for our city, producing oxygen and removing nitrogen oxides, sulphur, ammonia and airborne particulate.
- Trees provide shade in the summer reducing the heat island effect, making our city cooler in the summer and reducing ozone.
- Trees increase property values by adding to the walkability of our neighborhoods and establishing a sense of place.
- Trees enhance the economic vitality of the city, making it a more attractive place to invest, to shop, and to locate a business in. People hang out, eat and shop more often and for greater lengths of time on tree-lined streets.
- Trees help manage rainwater runoff, keeping our waterways cleaner and preventing erosion.
- Trees function as a traffic calming measure, the tree canopy makes the street seem narrower and enclosed, slowing traffic.
- Trees save you money, reduced cooling costs in the summer by blocking sunlight, reduced heating costs in the winter by blocking winds.

Why do urban trees need our attention? They grow out in the forest without any help. Generally, soils are disturbed, graded, and compacted, with low levels of oxygen and high levels of salt. As a result, trees and forests in the urban environment are subject to stresses and limitations not commonly found in rural areas. Therefore, plans to establish or maintain urban forests must be adapted to suit the urban environment.

Understanding the value of street trees and developing a long term street tree policy is a necessary step our City needs to take.

Information on Trees has been taken from: www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/healthreport/urban.html; www.coloradotrees.org/benefits.htm; and www.treesaregood.com



(Above Right) Recent "kills" due to lack of concern during road and utility construction projects. Tree roots can be protected and maintained during construction projects with minimal effort. Simple measures can preserve our street trees, contractors merely must be required to comply.

(Above Center) When new trees are planted, generally undersized, they are left to fend for themselves. A transplanted tree needs to be watered and maintained for at least the first two years.

(All) Lack of maintenance, proper trimming and fertilizing, has left many of our city trees disease ridden, dying or just plain dead. Preventive maintenance is a simple and effective solution. Many of the trees pictured here have since been removed without being replaced.

