Minnesota Tree Care Advocate Program

Tree Steward City Application

The Tree Steward Program is coordinated by the University of Minnesota (UMN) and Tree Care Advocate Program. The intent of this program is to engage citizens in their community's urban forest in cooperation with local government. Tree Stewards are trained in curriculum selected by the local government and Tree Care Advocate Program. The training is 3-9 hours (depending on curriculum selected and field time required) and costs volunteers $25 to attend (pre-register with payment to TCA Program). Classes usually have a 10-25 people to ensure specialized attention. During training, the UMN will provide samples and equipment, but the city is responsible for providing equipment when volunteers begin field work in their community. Volunteers also take a competency assessment and need a score of 75% or above (retakes available).

Participants must be 18 years or older or have signed parental consent.

Please reach out if you have questions. We're happy to help you fill out this application.

Name of Municipality/County: _____

Mailing Address (Street Address, Suite, PO Box, etc.): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

We request that all communities involved with this program have a liability waiver.

Does your community currently have a liability waiver form?
    ☐ Yes   ☐ No
If not, would you like the TCA Program to provide an example of a liability waiver?
    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Primary Municipality/County Contact:
    Name: _____
    Email: _____ | Phone #: _____
    Duty within program: *(All three areas must be covered by primary or secondary contact)*
        ☐ Main contact for volunteers (e.g., notify of events, answer general questions)
        ☐ Main contact for the UMN Tree Care Advocate staff (e.g., provide data collection)
        ☐ Main contact to mobilize tools for volunteers (e.g., tools, neon vests, pruning map)

Secondary Municipality/County Contact (optional):
    Name: _____
    Email: _____ | Phone #: _____
    Duty within program:
        ☐ Main contact for volunteers (e.g., notify of events, answer general questions)
        ☐ Main contact for the UMN Tree Care Advocate staff (e.g., provide data collection)
        ☐ Main contact to mobilize tools for volunteers (e.g., tools, neon vests, pruning map)

How will you manage when volunteers complete work?

☑ <u>Flexible</u>: Maps/locations will consistently be available so volunteers can work alone or in groups as convenient. (Brush pickup must also be flexible and arranged with staff.)
☐ <u>Structured</u>: We will organize weekly/monthly outings where staff are present

How will you manage equipment for volunteers (handsaws, pruners, safety vests, etc.)?

☑ <u>Flexible</u>: We'll purchase equipment that will be available for checkout at a gov't location
☐ <u>Structured</u>: We'll organize outings where equipment will be provided by staff

How will you manage the brush created?

☐ <u>Flexible</u>: Volunteers call/email Municipality/County Contact with address for city pickup
    ☐ It will be picked up once a week by staff
    ☐ It will be picked up once every other week by staff
☐ <u>Structured</u>: Organized weekly outings will have staff removing brush on site

How will you manage when volunteers monitor tree health independently and need to report trees?

☐ Volunteers will fil out a pre-made, paper report card with details and drop it off at a location where city staff can access and address the issue(s) reported
☐ There is a designated email address that volunteers can report trees of concern that will be accessed only by city staff
    Designated email address: _____
☐ There exists an online, city-hosted system where volunteers will fill out a form that will be directed to the appropriate staff
    Web address: _____
☐ Needs to be discussed with appropriate staff to set up a system

Do you have a system for volunteers to get involved with watering public trees? (A water management plan is critical to maintain long-term tree health, newly planted or established.)
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If not, are you interested in learning more about how to set up a watering program?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

What pruning-specific information does the city want volunteers to learn?

Note: All 3 options include a combination of presentation-style and hands-on learning. Additionally, refresher trainings are available upon request in years following the initial training.

☐ <u>Option 1 (Basic)</u>: Tree stem protection systems, mulch volcanoes, suckers, sprouts
☐ <u>Option 2 (Advanced)</u>: Basic + included bark, co-dominant leaders, crossing or rubbing branches, proper spacing between branches, deadwood, temporary branches, structural pruning
☐ <u>Option 3</u>: Basic + Advanced + fruit tree pruning

Volunteer Certification Requirements

Annual Requirements

After initial training, Tree Stewards are expected to complete <u>10 hours of volunteerism or attend 3 city-hosted pruning events every calendar year</u>. Individual volunteers submit volunteer hours at https://mntca.umn.edu/tree-care-advisor/education-volunteer-hours-reporting. If a volunteer is unable to report their hours, the Primary or Secondary Contact may submit hours for them. (Note: Volunteers will need their member number in order to submit hours. Member numbers can be found on each volunteer's Membership Card.)

Hours need to be submitted no later than December 31st of each year. This means that Municipality/County staff should have a schedule of events or a process for volunteers to volunteer on their own time in order to meet these hour requirements.

Volunteers that don't complete and report the 10-hour or 3-event minimum and do not apply for temporary inactive status will become inactive and can no longer represent the Tree Steward Program. (Contact TCA Program Coordinator if someone would like to reactivate.)

At the time of the initial Tree Steward training, it is highly recommended that the Municipality/County have at least 2 future dates scheduled for volunteer events. This helps ensure the program's success and also allows for advertisement of the events at the initial training.

Potential Event 1	**Potential Event 2**
Date: _____	Date: _____
Time: _____	Time: _____
Location: _____	Location: _____

Recertification Requirements

Volunteers recertify every 3 years by passing the renewal competency assessment with a minimum of 75% correct answers. Renewal competency assessments are available online or through postal mail at no cost.

Safety Considerations for Volunteers

- Volunteers may work within their comfort level for trained duties <u>only while two feet are firmly on the ground</u>, not to exceed 7 feet off the ground. (Contact TCA Program Coordinator for guidelines for volunteers with different abilities, such as people using wheelchairs)
- Volunteers must wear suitable clothing to protect themselves, including closed-foot shoes
- Volunteers work only within and directly with their own community
- Volunteers work only on public land, unless approved by Municipality/Cnty Main Contact
- Volunteers work with Municipality/County Main Contact to determine weather safety
- Volunteers report injuries or potentially dangerous situations immediately to Municipality/County Main Contact
- Volunteers do not use ladders, pole saws or loppers, or chainsaws.

Additional Notes

The MNTCA Program Coordinator will provide all registration contact information to staff for your convenience post-training. This will allow you to share about upcoming pruning events.

Data collection is very important to our program to promote funding for urban forestry efforts in Minnesota. For each Tree Steward event or independent activity completed by a volunteer, data must be collected and shared with the program. Contact Sonja (toste016@umn.edu) for the proper reporting forms.

To submit this form, or if you have any questions, please email Sonja Tosteson (TCA Program Coordinator) at toste016@umn.edu.

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Minnesota Tree Steward community!

Learn more at mntca.umn.edu

Department of
FOREST RESOURCES
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Minnesota Tree Care
Advocate Program

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