

# Minnesota Tree Care Advocate Program

*2022 Annual Report*



**80** *Active Tree Care Advocate Volunteers*  
**4,711** *Volunteer Hours*



## Our Program

The Minnesota Tree Care Advocate Program is an organization of University of Minnesota trained volunteers throughout the state dedicated to urban and community forestry. Our mission is to educate citizens of the state about their urban forests so that they, in turn, can volunteer in their neighborhoods and communities. This program is currently comprised of two community forestry programs, including the Tree Care Advisor Program (1993) and the Tree Steward Program (2016) (which absorbed the Citizen Pruner Program in 2022).



**4,711**

Volunteer Hours  
Logged in 2022

**\$152,306**

Value of Volunteer  
2022 Contributions

## COVID-19 Impacts on Volunteerism in 2022

As COVID has been present but with waning impact, our programs have been regaining momentum. This has been the case for interest from all stakeholders, including volunteers, residents, and city/municipal staff. Listed below are a few ways we were able to engage with volunteers in 2022:

- The Tree Care Advisor Core Course was conducted primarily over Zoom with a single day outdoor field session for volunteers-in-training to practice their hands on skills.
- Tree Essentials workshops were held again as outdoor field workshops in at the Urban Forestry Outreach & Research Nursery on the St. Paul Campus.
- Three Tree Steward trainings were able to be held in person for the communities of St. Paul, Austin, and La Crescent.
- A new formalized partnership with UMN Extension Yard and Garden Line allowed Advisors to increase program impact in helping to answer public questions on trees.
- Tree Care Advisor volunteers were able to participate in the "Ask a Tree Care Advisor" Q&A booth at the Minnesota State Fair as long as they were comfortable doing so. In 2022, over 5,000 fairgoers stopped by our booth.

## 2022 Volunteers Trained by Program



**9**

***Tree Care Advisors trained***



**41**

***Tree Stewards trained***



**161**

***People attended other workshops***

## Tree Care Advisor Program

The Tree Care Advisor Program was founded in 1992 and has since educated independent volunteers to act as volunteers, educators, and facilitators in communities throughout Minnesota. These volunteers are trained through a 40 hour Core Course on all things related to trees and shrubs. Volunteers are asked to complete 25 hours of volunteer service and 4 hours of continuing education each calendar year to remain active and up-to-date on the latest research.



## Tree Care Advisor Accomplishments

### 2022 Accomplishments



**3,145**

*volunteer hours*



**63**

*active volunteers*



**\$101,677.85**

*value of volunteer contributions*

### Overall Accomplishments



**115,225**

*volunteer hours*



**314**

*trained volunteers*



**\$3,573,916.25**

*value of volunteer contributions*

## Forest Resources Outreach Line

The over 50 year old Forest Resources Outreach Line is a resource for Minnesotans to ask questions about their trees and shrubs via email or telephone. Tree Care Advisor volunteers assist in answering these questions to provide research-based and a non-biased resolution to their questions. In 2022, both Tree Care Advisors and UFOR staff managed the outreach line.



**321** *total questions were received*



**50**

*residents were advised to contact a city forester or certified arborist*



**66**

*disease and pest identification questions*



**91**

*damage and possible decline questions*



**60**

*pruning and general tree care questions*

## Tree Steward Program



The Tree Steward Program is created to train community volunteers on a wide array of topics related to planting, watering, pruning, monitoring young tree health, and leading others in regards to young tree care. These volunteers are encouraged to complete 10 hours of volunteer work each calendar year to remain active.

## Tree Steward Accomplishments

### 2022 Accomplishments



**1,566**

*volunteer hours*



**17**

*active volunteers*



**\$50,628.78**

*value of volunteer contributions*

### Overall Accomplishments



**3,730.5**

*volunteer hours*



**127**

*trained volunteers*



**\$86,085.38**

*value of volunteer contributions*

## Words from Community Volunteers

### What do you think is the most important work you do ... through the [Advisor] program?

- "I volunteer for a non profit in our community. We have tree give aways twice/year. We select the tree species and listen to the residents of our community who come to pick up a free tree. We advise them about which tree species would be best for their site and preferences."*
- "Reassuring homeowners that they are doing the best for their trees and also informing them on best practices for long term health of their trees."*
- "Helping my small town's public works department take care of boulevard and park trees (we do all the small tree pruning, I recommend tree species for parks, etc.)"*
- "Advocate for trees. Plant trees. Try to get the word out to the public. Trees are great!"*

### What do you think is the most important work you do ... through the Tree Steward program?

- "Assist in removing branches above sidewalks and in front of signs which allows the city to do other things and assists in the safety for citizens."*
- "Let other, non-Tree Steward, regular citizens, who see us, know that it is possible to learn about and help care for city trees."*
- "Help plant new trees to improve our tree canopy and to prepare for [emerald ash borer]."*