

Tree City USA - What Does It Mean?

By City Forester Brain Colter

From Adrian to Zeeland, there are 118 Tree City's in Michigan designated as such by the National Arbor Day Foundation. The four criteria for being Tree City are:

- Spending at least \$2.00 per capita on trees
- Recognizing and celebrating Arbor Day
- Having a city Forester or Tree Board
- Having a tree ordinance

The City of Grosse Pointe Park has been named Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation for 37 straight years. Grosse Pointe Park has also been awarded the prestigious Growth Award. This recognizes our programs and efforts above and beyond the four requirements needed to become a Tree City. Once a city has been granted the Growth Award for ten years, it is recognized as a Sterling Community. Reasons why Grosse Pointe Park is a Sterling Community as recognized by the National Arbor Day Foundation:

- Completing a comprehensive street tree inventory which identified every city owned tree.
- Conducting a city-wide survey by the city's certified arborist identifying potential planting sites, concentrating on canopy deficient areas.
- Having Patterson Park acknowledged by the National Wildlife Federation as a Certified Wildlife Habitat.
- Utilizing "waste" wood for city projects (i.e. floor in the warming hut, stakes for newly planted trees, woodchips for exercise course in park, frame of bocce ball court, benches, picnic table, timeline, mantle at warming hut, lumber for scarecrows, etc.)
- Using 100% biodegradable vegetable-based oil for chain saw lubricant in forestry department.
- Use of environmentally friendly, low emission mix oil in forestry department.
- Composting of resident's Christmas trees.
- Partnering with neighboring communities for tree planting bids.
- Aggressive tree replanting program.
- Ongoing educational presentations.
- Practicing Plant Health Care (PHC).
- Use of volunteers.
- Composting and recycling all of our leaves.
- Extensive emerald ash borer study.
- Memorial tree program.

- Creation of the arboretum at Three Mile Park.
- Encouragement of urban farms on vacant property.
- Use of non-chemical, corn-glutton, as a natural fertilizer on our city owned properties.

NOTE: The last Friday in April is always Arbor Day in Michigan. Celebrate Arbor Day this spring by planting a tree!