



PROVIDENCE  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
PLANTING  
PROGRAM

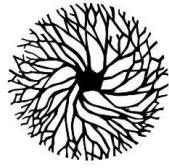
## **Neighborhood Tree Leader Responsibilities**

### ***Before Planting Day***

You will receive (or have already) a list of the addresses and the number of trees at each address we have approved from your original list.

- Check-in w/ participants regarding any questions or loose-ends we noted on your planting list, and update us.
- Walk through your planting route and compare the T's on the curb to your revised request.
- Check in with everyone scheduled to receive a tree and make sure that they:
  - Still want the tree(s) and are okay with the tree's location
  - Understand and agree to approximately 4x6 feet (+/-) of sidewalk being removed where each tree is planted (we do leave at least 3 ft of sidewalk for ADA standards.
  - Are able to plant with us or participate in some other way during the planting.
  - Understand that they will need to water once a week, weed regularly and mulch yearly
- If you see discrepancies that don't make sense to you, or find that people scheduled to receive trees no longer want them, or do not want a part of their sidewalk removed, please call Cassie Tharinger at 368-5380 as soon as possible so we can clarify before the contractor begins work cutting the sidewalk.
- Make sure your backup Tree Leader is in the loop on the details of tree planting day, in case there's an emergency and you are not able to be there.
- Arrange for someone to provide water/refreshments—this will help keep everyone happy!

**PO Box 5897**  
**Providence, RI 02906**  
**401-368-5380**  
**[ctharinger@pnpp.org](mailto:ctharinger@pnpp.org)**



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## Reminders & Requirements for Planting Day

1. Scoop out holes for the trees in the center of the prepped pits before we arrive.
  - o 2 feet long by 2 feet wide and 1 foot deep(If you dig your holes out the night before, please put something over the hole so no one will fall in!)
2. Gather participants at the starting address and time. Wait there for PNPP to arrive and hold the planting demonstration--do *not* plant before this, *even if the trees are there!*
3. Divide participants into groups of 2 to 3 people for each tree.
4. Each group should ideally have: 2 to 3 shovels, a pair of pruning shears, a sharp utility knife or scissors, a small narrow saw, a garden rake, and a broom.
5. Everyone should wear boots and gloves (absolutely no open-toed shoes or bare hands.)
6. Hook up several hoses for watering. If you can't reach a location with a hose, haul water with buckets. **Water all trees** the day they are planted and thereafter with 10-20 gallons a week until Halloween!
7. Mulch each tree with the wood chips, which the Forestry Department will provide. If people want to use decorative mulch, they must purchase it beforehand and mulch on planting day.
8. Clean up area with brooms and rakes.

## Other Suggestions

Encourage neighbors to come out and help plant even if they didn't get a tree. Kids are welcome with parental supervision!

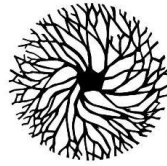
Call or email your Council Person and invite him/her to your planting.

Have materials on hand to put up small barriers, such as fencing or sturdy wooden posts, to keep animals out of the tree well and/or protect the trees.

Have refreshments available at the end of the planting route to provide a small celebration for your neighborhood's achievement!

Take pictures—you'll want to document the day, and have something to compare the trees to 20 years from now, when they're 35 feet tall!!! (This is a great volunteer task to assign someone who might not be as able to do heavy lifting & digging!)

On or before planting day feel free to call with any last minute info or questions! (401) 368-5380.



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## Tree Planting Instructions

**Dig a shallow, broad, planting hole:** Make the hole wide, as much as 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball but only as deep as the root ball.

**Identify the root flare:** The root flare is where the roots spread at the base of the tree. This point should be partially visible after the tree has been planted. If the trunk flare is not partially visible, you may have to remove some soil from the top of the root ball. Find it so you can determine how deep the hole needs to be for proper planting.

**For containerized trees, remove tree:** Carefully cutting down the sides of the container may make this easier. Inspect the root ball for circling roots and cut or remove them. Expose the trunk flare, if necessary.

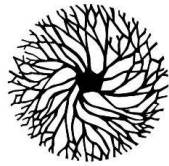
**Place the tree at the proper height:** Before placing the tree in the hole, check to see that the hole has been dug to the proper depth and no more. To avoid damage when setting the tree in the hole, always lift the tree by the root ball and trunk, and never by the trunk alone.

**Straighten the tree in the hole:** Before you begin backfilling, have someone view the tree from several directions to confirm that the tree is straight. Once you begin backfilling, it is difficult to reposition the tree.

**Fill the hole gently but firmly:** Fill the hole about one-third full and gently but firmly tamp the soil around the base of the root ball. Then, if the root ball is wrapped, cut and remove any fabric, plastic, string, and wire from around the trunk and root ball to facilitate growth (see diagram). Be careful not to damage the trunk or roots in the process. Fill the remainder of the hole, taking care to firmly pack soil to eliminate air pockets that may cause roots to dry out. To avoid this problem, add the soil a few inches at a time and settle with water. Continue this process until the hole is filled and the tree is firmly planted. It is not recommended to apply fertilizer at the time of planting.

**Mulch the base of the tree:** Mulch is simply organic matter applied to the area at the base of the tree. It acts as a blanket to hold moisture, it moderates soil temperature extremes, and it reduces competition from grass and weeds. Some good choices are leaf litter, pine straw, shredded bark, peat moss, or composted wood chips. A 2- to 4-inch layer is ideal. More than 4 inches may cause a problem with oxygen and moisture levels. When placing mulch, be sure that the actual trunk of the tree is not covered.

**Provide follow-up care:** Keep the soil moist but not soaked; overwatering causes leaves to turn yellow or fall off. Water trees 10-20 gallons at least once a week, barring rain, and more frequently during hot weather. 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.



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## History of PNPP & Providence Street Trees

In 1907, Providence was the site of about 50,000 street trees. A street tree inventory in 1988 recorded a population of 22,320 trees. This drastic reduction of trees was the result of a few different factors: Dutch Elm Disease, urban planning policies, and the failure to replant sufficient amounts of trees. In an urban environment, street trees must be planted continuously to compensate for loss from age, disease and structural defects, or else the population declines.

Mary Elizabeth Sharpe, Peggy Sharpe and John Campanini established PNPP in 1988 in order to ensure a consistent match of funds from the Providence Parks Department, for the continued planting of street trees in Providence at the grassroots level. Since 1989, PNPP has co-funded the planting of over 13,000 street trees through the efforts of over 700 neighborhood groups.

A 2006 Street Tree Tally found 25,000 street trees in Providence, a population consisting of 95 different species. **In 20 years we have increased the street tree population by fewer than 3000 trees.** (This statistic illustrates the importance of both the replanting effort and the need for continued and increased stewardship of our urban forest!)

## Protecting & Advocating for Our Urban Forest

Providence's Trees are protected by both our Municipal Tree Ordinance, and by our Landscaping and Tree Protection portion of our Zoning Ordinance. Contractors are required to obtain a permit from the Forestry Division in order to perform work on street trees in Providence, and must get permission from the City Forester to remove any tree on private property greater than 32" in diameter. More information on these ordinances can be found at <http://forestry.providenceri.com/forestry>.

Advocacy and stewardship are invaluable resources to our urban forest. The City Forester and Tree Resource Manager are always willing to perform inspections, should you see developers or contractors that may not be in compliance with City ordinances. If you see a city tree that is hazardous or that needs pruning, please call the Forestry office at 785-9450, ext. 254.

The Parks Department's Forestry Division prunes and removes City trees as needed, and has begun a systematic, ward-by-ward rotational pruning program, as well as a "block-pruning" initiative, both of which allow for better care of our existing tree canopy. PNPP and the Forestry Division have also launched a *Providence Citizen Foresters Program*, to train and authorize citizens to help prune and steward our youngest and most vulnerable urban trees. (More info at [www.pnpp.org](http://www.pnpp.org))

Another way you can help is by [sending letter or email to the Mayor's office and to your City Council person](#) expressing your support for more street trees in our city, encouraging funding for tree planting programs. Our elected officials aren't mind readers, and they need to hear from you on subjects that are important to you and your neighbors. Remind them that street trees improve the quality of life in the city, increase property values, clean the air and water, naturally help to calm traffic, and lower neighborhood crime rates!