

The North Carolina Tree Advocacy Network



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NCTAN Urges Communities to Preserve and Plant Urban Trees for Economic, Environmental, and Health Benefits. *NC Arbor Day is a great time for communities to act and benefit more from trees.*

Raleigh, N.C. – The North Carolina Tree Advocacy Network (NCTAN) urges homeowners, municipalities, businesses, and developers to honor NC Arbor Day by preserving and planting trees in their communities to further benefit the state’s economy, environment, and health. North Carolina Arbor Day will be celebrated on Friday, March 21 this year.

“Each year North Carolina urban trees provide our state with \$6.2 billion in community-wide environmental benefits, and add \$1.9 billion to property values,” said NCTAN member and NC Urban Forest Council Executive Director Kim Strazisar. “The best way to maintain and improve that number is to preserve and plant urban trees across North Carolina on Arbor Day and year round.”

In addition to providing environmental and property value benefits, North Carolina’s urban trees also:

- **Save home energy costs.** Properly placed trees can reduce air conditioning by 30% and heating by 20-50%, which saves an average household \$100-\$250 in energy costs annually.
- **Increase retail business.** Research proves shoppers will travel farther, stay longer, and spend 9-12% more in retail areas with high quality trees.
- **Decrease storm flooding.** Urban trees absorb and filter stormwater which allows municipal systems to better handle runoff; reducing flooding, infrastructure damage, and groundwater pollution.

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- **Reduce crime.** Property crimes are less frequent in residential neighborhoods when there are trees in right-of-ways and more abundant vegetation around houses and buildings.
- **Improve physical and mental health in children and adults.** Aerobic exercise, like walking, in a natural environment 20 minutes a day, three days a week, may lead to greater gains in lowering blood pressure, stress, depression, and ADD symptoms compared with exercise in non-green urban settings.
- **Improve social inequities.** Planting trees in redlined communities helps reverse discriminatory policies and creates fresh air, clean drinking water, and cooler neighborhoods; which in turn lowers utility costs, crime, and heat-related illnesses.

“North Carolina's urban tree canopy provides all the benefits that motivate people to visit, move to, and invest in our communities,” said Strazisar. “We encourage all North Carolina residents, businesses, and policy makers to contact their local community tree organization and learn how they can donate or volunteer to protect, maintain, and plant urban trees in their neighborhoods.”

Research, tree care guides, NC Arbor Day event information, and NCTAN contact information can be found at www.ncufc.org/NC-Community-Tree-Advocacy.php.

The North Carolina Tree Advocacy Network (NCTAN) is a network of community leaders working towards preserving and enhancing NC's urban forests through promoting policy, high level fundraising, and advancing best practices in advocating for urban forests for the benefit of all NC citizens. NC TCAN members include Alliance for Cape Fear Trees, Asheville Greenworks, Keep Durham Beautiful, Forest Regen, NC Urban Forest Council, Project Pando, ReLeaf of Greenville, TreesCharlotte, TreesDavidson, TreesMatthews, TreesUnion, Trees for the Triangle, and We Plant It Forward.

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