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County Executive



**Department of
Environmental
Resources**
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Director

Urban Tree Canopy Fact Sheet

What is an urban tree canopy?



The canopy of a tree or group of trees is the area of leaves and branches that create shade under the tree(s). Like umbrellas, trees reduce the amount of sunlight and rain reaching the ground. Trees in urban environments are particularly important for intercepting rainfall before it becomes stormwater runoff. Tree leaves, branches, stems, and roots catch falling rain, filter out pollutants, and absorb stormwater.



What are the benefits to property owners and communities?

- ▶ Trees located within 50 feet of a structure can boost property values.
- ▶ Buildings shaded by trees have lower air conditioning costs and evergreen trees can act as a wind buffer, protecting buildings from heat loss.
- ▶ Trees clean polluted air and make communities quieter by absorbing sound. Tree roots reduce stormwater through evapotranspiration. Water is taken up by the roots and released back into the atmosphere via the leaves as water vapor.

How can you determine if your property is suitable for a tree planting project?

To give your new tree enough room for healthy growth and to avoid interference with utilities and structures, be sure to plant it:

- ▶ At least 3 feet from underground utilities, fences, walkways, driveways, decks, and patios.
- ▶ At least 7 feet from the stems of small trees and shrubs.
- ▶ At least 10 feet from overhead utilities and trunks of other large trees.
- ▶ At least 15 feet from structures.

Qualifying for a Rebate

Project	Individual Residence OR Individual Members of a Housing Cooperative	Commercial, Multi-Family Dwelling, Nonprofit, Not-for-Profit Organizations, Housing Cooperatives
Urban Tree Canopy	\$1,200 per lot; \$150 per tree	\$1,800 per lot; \$150 per tree

To be eligible for a rebate, the following criteria must be met by all tree planting projects:

- ▶ New trees must be planted on private property (not in the public right-of-way).
- ▶ Trees must be planted between October 1 and May 1 and be native species.
- ▶ Trees must be at least 5 feet tall, at least ½-caliper inch, and planted in a 5-gallon (or larger) container or balled and burlapped.

What are the costs?

Tree planting is a relatively inexpensive stormwater reduction method. The cost of the tree itself depends on the species and size of tree chosen—an 8–12 foot tree can range in cost from \$75 to \$200, including mulch.

Can you do this project yourself?

Yes. Native tree planting and basic tree care practices like watering and mulching can be done by the property owner. However, some tree care is best left up to trained professionals, such as work that cannot be performed from the ground; work that cannot be performed with hand tools like pruners, loppers, and pole saws; and any work within 10 feet of any kind of overhead utility line.

For more information, call 311 or contact us at DERRebatesandCredits@co.pg.md.us.

