

# Get RainReady with TREES



In RainReady<sup>SM</sup> communities, better water management means that homes, schools, and businesses are prepared for rain—whether too much or too little. RainReady programs keep residences secure and dry, services running, and rivers and lakes clean.

## THE VALUE OF A TREE:

Trees have been found to reduce air pollution, increase property values, improve human health and well-being, decrease energy costs and create a sense of community among residents, thereby lowering crime rates. For these reasons alone, the city will benefit from more trees.



## BACKGROUND ON CHICAGO'S URBAN FOREST:

- Chicago's urban forest is comprised of over 3.5 million trees.
- Chicago's tree canopy in 2008 was 17.2% of our land area. Most of the land available for planting more trees is in our backyards, front yards, and parkways.
- Every year, Chicago's urban forest:
  - Removes 888 tons of pollution, at a value of \$6.4 million.
  - Absorbs 25,200 tons of carbon dioxide.
  - The structural value of our urban forest is estimated at \$2.3 billion.

## WE CAN HELP!

If you or your community are interested in getting RainReady, CNT staff members are available for presentations and for case-by-case technical assistance. Our presentations explain the benefits of rain readiness and outline their key elements, including needs assessments, financing, and supportive policies.

For more information visit [rainready.org](http://rainready.org) or contact [info@rainready.org](mailto:info@rainready.org).

## WHY PLANT A TREE AT HOME?

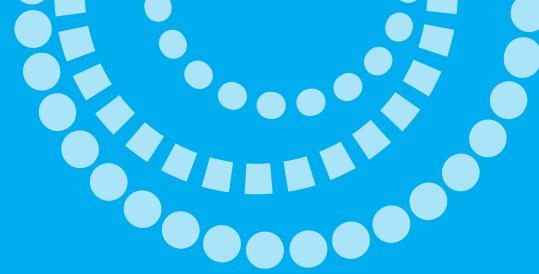
- By planting strategically, you can reduce your energy bills and carbon footprint.
- Increase your property value.
- Remove pollution from the air and help prevent flooding by managing stormwater.
- Buffer noise pollution.
- Provide shade and wind protection.
- Increase habitat for local wildlife.

## DID YOU KNOW?

ONE MEDIUM-SIZED TREE  
CAN ABSORB 2,800 GALLONS OF  
RAINFALL PER YEAR.



# PLANTING A TREE: how to ...



## CONVENTIONAL LANDSCAPING

- Generates stormwater runoff and puts stress on our sewers while wasting treated water.
- Can be expensive to maintain and requires new planting annually.
- Sometimes includes exotic and invasive species.
- Can require the use of fertilizers and pesticides.
- Yearly planting, fertilizing and maintenance generates excess waste.
- Does not impact home energy efficiency.
- Often promotes materials shipped from far away at great cost.

## SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

- Minimizes stormwater runoff and utilizes valuable rainwater for irrigation.
- Minimizes maintenance costs by utilizing perennials and long-term landscape planning.
- Designed with native species that have adapted to survive in our climate and do not require fertilizers or pesticides.
- Native plants maintain four-season appeal by attracting and sustaining our native birds and other wildlife year-round.
- Low-maintenance means low-waste. The waste generated is composted and reused throughout the landscape.
- Promotes home energy efficiency. Trees provide shade in summer and block winds in winter.
- Supports our local businesses by employing a greater number of small facilities, hand labor and ongoing maintenance.

## BEFORE YOU BUY ...

1. Take a good look at your yard. Placement should take into account the height, shape, root structure, and resilience of your tree. See the Recommended Tree list below for some common examples.
2. Make sure you're equipped to transport and plant your new tree. Trees can be heavy and require substantial digging when planting. If you don't feel confident transporting or planting your tree, consider purchasing a smaller tree, or "whip," or consult a professional for help.
3. Spring and fall are the best times to plant trees. Summer planting is not recommended and will reduce the likelihood your tree will survive its first year.

\* Call before you dig! Within Chicago city limits, call "DIGGER" (the Chicago Utility Alert Network) at 312-744-7000

\* Chicago residents who want to plant trees or garden in City-owned parkway may need a permit from the Department of Streets and Sanitation Bureau of Forestry and/or Department of Transportation, visit [www.cityofchicago.org](http://www.cityofchicago.org) for more information.

## HOW TO HELP YOUR TREE SURVIVE ITS FIRST YEAR

- ✓ **WATERING:** Newly transplanted and young trees require one inch of water per week when in leaf.
- ✓ **MULCHING:** Annual mulching helps keep roots cool in summer and warm in winter. Mulch should be spread in the shape of a saucer at least two or three feet around the base of the tree and should not be mounded up against a tree's trunk.
- ✓ **STAKING AND WRAPPING:** This step is optional and depends on the species you buy. Check with your garden center or nursery.
- ✓ **PRUNING:** Do not prune during the first year. If pruning cannot be done with both feet on the ground, contact an arborist. Visit the Illinois Arborist Association at [www.illinoisarborist.org](http://www.illinoisarborist.org).

## HOW TO PLANT YOUR TREE

Nursery trees come one of three ways: bare-root, balled and burlapped (B+B) or potted. The B+B method is the most common.

**1**

Before digging the planting hole, measure the width and height of the root ball. Your planting hole should be the same depth as the root ball, but three times as wide.

**2**

Set root ball on undisturbed soil to prevent settling.

**3**

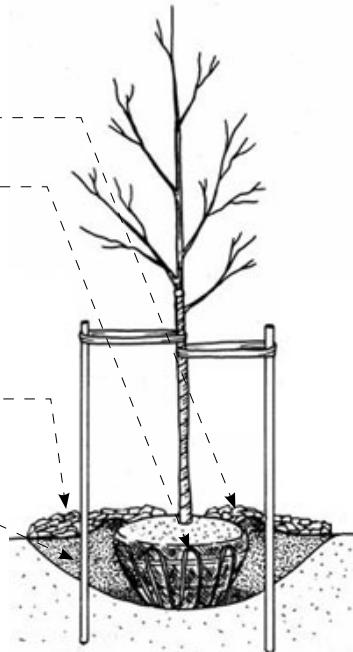
Once the tree is in the hole, remove any wires or ropes around the burlap and trunk. Fold the burlap back and tuck it in towards the bottom of the root ball.

**4**

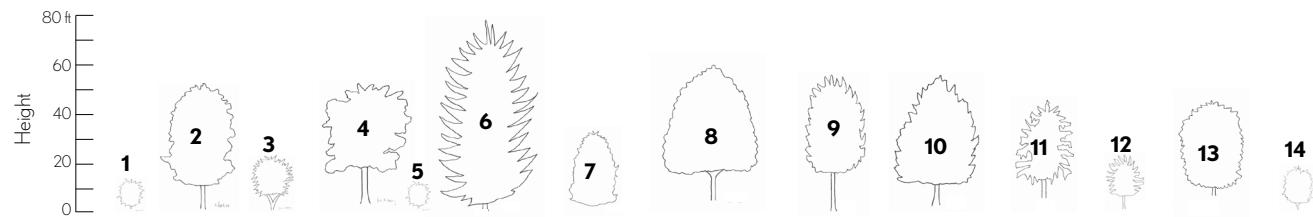
Fill the hole with soil, only up to the trunk, to stabilize; allow the rest of the backfill to settle naturally.

**5**

Apply two to three inches of mulch over the root ball and backfill. Keep mulch away from trunk base.



## RECOMMENDED TREES FOR CHICAGO



Symbol key: Full Sun ☀ Partial Shade ☁ Beneficial to Birds 🐦 Native to the Midwest 🌳 For a full list of recommended trees for Chicago, visit [www.cityofchicago.org/rainbarrel](http://www.cityofchicago.org/rainbarrel)

Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes	Soil Conditions
1. Redbud	Cercis canadensis	Bright pink edible flowers in early spring, good under power lines	Moist, well-drained ☀ 🌳
2. Kentucky coffee tree	Gymnocladus dioica	Very tolerant and adaptable	Wet ☁
3. Serviceberry	Amelanchier spp.	Spring flowers, good under power lines	Moist, well-drained ☁ 🐦
4. Hackberry	Celtis occidentalis	Large shade tree, adaptable to different soils, fruits loved by birds	Tolerant of most soils 🐦
5. Blackhaw viburnum	Viburnum prunifolium	Spring white flowers, can make a great hedge, good under power lines	Tolerant of most soils 🐦
6. Norway spruce	Picea abies	Evergreen shadetree, make a great windbreak	Moist, well-drained ☁
7. Western red cedar	Thuja plicata	Cone-like shape keeps without pruning	Wet ☁ 🐦
8. Swamp white oak	Quercus bicolor	Symmetrical, rounded canopy	Wet ☁ 🐦
9. Elm	Ulmus x "Morton Glory"	Disease-resistant, golden-yellow fall color, a classic tree	Moist, well-drained to dry ☀
10. American linden	Tilia americana	Fragrant flowers, can be used to make tea	Moist, well-drained ☀ 🌳
11. Ginkgo	Ginkgo biloba	Upright columnar for narrow spaces, golden-yellow fall color	Moist, well-drained to dry ☁ 🌳
12. Crabapple	Malus spp. "Prairie Fire"	Spring flowers and green apples, good under power lines	Tolerant of most soils 🐦
13. European beech	Fagus sylvatica	Attractive red fall color	Moist, well-drained soil ☀ 🐦
14. Cornelian cherry dogwood	Cornus mas	Mid-summer cherries, can make a great hedge, good under power lines	Moist, well-drained ☀ 🐦

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR SITE

### LAYOUT

Take a good look at your site. Note the placement of existing plants and trees, paved areas, buildings and power lines. Take a few days to monitor which areas get full or partial sunlight and take note of low spots that tend to collect water during rain storms.

### SOIL

Determine your soil type before you purchase new plants or trees and check with your local garden center for species adapted to your soil type. If you are planning to grow vegetables, build a raised bed or have your soil tested to ensure it is safe for growing vegetables.

### SUN

Before you buy new plants or trees, be sure to note the sunny and shady areas of your yard. Each species has its own sunlight requirement and should be planted accordingly. Look for opportunities to use trees for shading a seating area or the windows of your home.

## SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING TIPS

- Use locally-sourced and recycled materials where possible.
- Avoid impermeable surfaces. Utilize permeable materials where possible.
- Use homemade compost instead of store-bought fertilizers.
- Practice Integrated Pest Management instead of applying pesticides.
- If you choose to keep a lawn, utilize natural lawncare practices.
- To maximize energy savings, strategically plant trees to serve as wind-blocks in the winter and shade your home in the summer.
- See [www.chicagohomecomposting.org](http://www.chicagohomecomposting.org) and [www.landscapeforlife.org](http://www.landscapeforlife.org) for more information.

**ARE YOU RAINREADY? IS YOUR COMMUNITY RAINREADY?**

**LEARN MORE AT [WWW.RAINREADY.ORG](http://WWW.RAINREADY.ORG)**

