



NEWS RELEASE

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Volunteers Needed to Plant 1,500 Trees In Celebration of Arbor Day 2010

On Saturday, January 16, 2010, an army of volunteers will roll up their sleeves, grab their shovels, and plant trees in empty esplanades on North Wayside Drive between Interstate 10 and Bonham Street, all to celebrate Arbor Day 2010. The Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Trees for Houston, Greater East End District, Texas Forest Service and the Apache Foundation will join forces with volunteers to transform the designated esplanades into a new forest of 1,500 trees.

"Houston has been recognized as a Tree City for over 20 years by the National Arbor Day Foundation because of our city's commitment to its urban forest," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "That recognition has been earned by the hundreds of volunteers who respond once a year by spending their Saturday morning planting trees in parks and esplanades in celebration of Houston's Arbor Day. We thank them for their time and look forward to seeing them bright and early on January 16th."

The trees planted will have a positive impact on the environment for generations to come by helping to clean the air and drinking water, providing a habitat for wildlife and creating a more beautiful landscape. "A single tree can remove more than a ton of CO² over its lifetime," said Victor Cordova, HPARD City Forester. "That's just what one tree is capable of doing. Just imagine what 1,500 trees will do."

In addition, the trees will help our urban environment by shading ground and pavement that would otherwise store heat and radiate it back into the air. The new forest will also replace grass, thus cutting down on pollutant emissions from lawn mowers and sizable city expenditure on gasoline.

Three hundred volunteers are needed to plant the 1,500 trees in the designated esplanades. Individuals, clubs, and corporate teams are encouraged to volunteer. Children are welcome but must be accompanied by a responsible adult or guardian. The tree planting event will take place rain or shine. Participants are asked to arrive at 7:30 a.m. on January 16. Volunteers should contact Oneika McCarthy to register by email at oneika.mccarthy@cityofhouston.net or by phone at (832) 395-7030.

For more information on Arbor Day or the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.