

City offers free replacement trees for ash tree removal

The City of Plymouth offers an incentive to residents to help combat Emerald Ash Borer – a free replacement tree for each ash tree removed.

Winter is the best time to remove ash trees. Since borers are dormant in the winter, they are more likely to remain in the tree, which will help prevent them from spreading. There is also less damage to the lawn or landscaping.

Once a resident removes an ash tree, the City of Plymouth will provide a free replacement tree of his or her choice, while supplies last. Residents may receive up to four free replacement trees per property per year.

“Emerald Ash Borer is here – it’s only a matter of time before untreated ash trees become infested,” said City Forester Paul Buck. “This program offers an incentive for residents to remove their private ash trees now to help slow the spread of the invasive pest.”

To qualify, ash trees must be greater than or equal to 5 inches in diameter. A contractor invoice or time-stamped before/after pictures must be included with the application.

The program is set for two years to give residents ample opportunity to remove their ash trees. To pick up new trees in the spring of 2020, ash trees must be removed by late spring 2019. Trees removed next winter will qualify for free replacements in the spring of 2021. Submissions for replacement trees are accepted year-round on the city’s website at plymouthmn.gov/eab.

Selecting and providing a variety of trees to residents as replacements for ash trees will contribute to the diversity of Plymouth’s urban forest. Trees provide numerous benefits, including stormwater filtration, shade and habitat for wildlife.



To help combat Emerald Ash Borer, the City of Plymouth will provide free replacement trees – up to four trees per property per year while supplies last – for each ash tree removed in Plymouth.

Ash Tree Disposal at Yard Waste Site

Residents who cut down their own ash trees may bring the wood or brush to the Plymouth Yard Waste Site, 14900 23rd Ave. N. Typically closed during the winter months, the Plymouth Yard Waste Site will be open special hours for ash tree disposal 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 9.

The site is set to open for the season Wednesday, April 3, weather permitting.

For operating hours and more information, visit plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste.

About Emerald Ash Borer

Emerald Ash Borer was confirmed in Plymouth in 2015. It is a small, invasive insect that infects ash trees and spreads quickly, typically killing a majority of ash trees in its path.

There are two options for private property owners with ash trees – begin a course of treatment immediately, or plan for the tree to be removed.

For those who choose the former, treatment is typically necessary for the rest of the tree’s life.

Ash trees ... continued on page 2E

City sells low-cost trees, shrubs

Plymouth’s annual low-cost Tree and Shrub Sale runs Friday, March 1 through Wednesday, May 1 at plymouthmn.gov/treesale.

City staff selects trees, shrubs and fruit-bearing plants each year that are well adapted to local growing conditions and resistant to pests and diseases.

Most trees are bare root and 5-6 feet tall at time of purchase. Orders are available for pickup May 10-11 at the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N.

Get Help Choosing Plants

Before placing an order online, residents may ask questions and gather advice on selecting plants at the Plymouth City Sampler 9-11 a.m. Saturday, April 27 at the Plymouth Maintenance Facility.



The Gold Tide Forsythia is one of the 20 varieties of plants featured in this year’s Tree and Shrub Sale. Orders are accepted March 1 through May 1.



Learn to change the microclimate of a yard to manage storm water onsite at a free Metro Blooms workshop set for May 2.

Metro Blooms workshop set for Thursday, May 2

Residents are invited to learn how to change their yards to help combat water pollution at a Metro Blooms workshop 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, May 2 at St. Barnabas Lutheran Church, 15600 Old Rockford Road. The workshop, “Creating Resilient Yards,” is free for Plymouth residents.

The workshop will teach residents how to change the microclimate of their yards to manage storm water onsite and help prevent runoff from their properties.

When it rains in an urban or suburban area, water droplets land on buildings, driveways, vehicles, parking lots and other nonporous surfaces. That runoff picks up dirt and pollutants and flows into storm drains and, eventually, streams and lakes.

According to Metro Blooms, the main source of water pollution is urbanization. Adding trees, rain gardens or native plants to a landscape helps capture storm water runoff by allowing it to soak into the soil onsite.

Workshop attendees will receive recommendations for establishing mowable, native alternatives to turf from landscape designers and Master Gardeners. To register for the workshop, call 651-699-2426 or visit metroblooms.org/workshops.

Adopt a storm drain

Residents are encouraged to adopt a neighborhood storm drain and ensure it is kept free of sticks, leaves and debris.

It’s easy to do – and a great volunteer opportunity for families and groups. Just a rake or broom and some gloves are needed.

Cleaning storm drains is essential to protecting lakes, streams and wetlands from excess pollutants and nutrients, which encourage excessive algae growth.

To adopt a storm drain, call the volunteer coordinator at 763-509-5230 or email volunteer@plymouthmn.gov.

Storm Drain-Marking Kits Available

The City of Plymouth loans storm drain-marking kits to residents. The message – no dumping, drains to lake – helps educate neighbors about storm drains and their relationship to water quality.

Residents are encouraged to borrow the kits and mark their neighborhood storm drains to help remind passersby that water and debris drains straight into lakes, streams and wetlands.



To borrow a kit, call Senior Engineering Technician Ben Scharenbroich at 763-509-5527. Kits can be picked up at Plymouth City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd.

RECYCLING RECAP

90% of Plymouth households recycled in 2018

Plymouth residents set the bar high when it comes to recycling. In 2018, 90 percent of Plymouth's 24,788 households participated in curbside recycling.

Tips for Efficient Recycling

When materials are sorted at the recycling plant, some items cause damage to the machinery, are too small or do not efficiently break down.

- Recyclables should be empty, clean and dry
- Recyclables should be no smaller than a credit card and lids should be left on plastic containers
- Put recyclables loosely in the cart, not bagged
- Bring plastic bags to grocery stores or retailers for recycling – plastic bags cause damage to machinery at the recycling plant
- Polystyrene/Styrofoam™ is difficult to break down and recycle – it should go in the trash
- Shredded paper goes in the trash – the fibers are too short for recycling



Street sweeping removes about 1,000 pounds of phosphorus from the streets annually, which helps protect Plymouth's waterbodies.

Street sweeping helps maintain water quality

Street cleaning is completed three times per year – and is vital for protecting Plymouth's lakes, creeks and wetlands.

On average, more than 1,500 tons of material – the equivalent of 3 million pounds – is cleaned off of city streets each year. Street sweeping is typically completed in April, June and August, and each cleaning takes about three weeks to sweep the entire city.

Maintaining clean streets is a high priority for the City of Plymouth because of its commitment to surface water quality. The city previously contracted with an outside vendor – but will enhance street sweeping operations and bring the task in-house this year.

"Street sweeping is important because it helps remove sediment, salt and other pollutants that would otherwise get carried away in storm water runoff – eventually reaching Plymouth's lakes, creeks and wetlands," said Water Resources Manager Vanessa Strong.

Sweeping removes about 1,000 pounds of phosphorus from the streets annually, which prevents excessive algae growth in Plymouth's waterbodies and allows the city to work toward surface water quality goals set by the Minnesota Pollution Control and Environmental Protection agencies.

Ash trees ... from page 1E

The city performs an ongoing, preventative treatment cycle on ash trees in city boulevards and parks that are a minimum of 15 inches in diameter and in good health. Smaller, unhealthy or hazardous ash trees on city property are set for removal to help slow the spread of the borer.

Residents with a city-owned boulevard ash tree slated for removal will be contacted by the city to select a free replacement tree. To apply for a replacement tree, for more information or to view an interactive map that shows the status of ash trees in Plymouth, visit plymouthmn.gov/eab.

Clean boats to prevent aquatic invasive species

When new plants, fish, mussels or other organisms are introduced in lakes and streams, they may threaten the quality of the aquatic ecosystems.

Residents are encouraged to thoroughly clean their boats and watercraft to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

A species is invasive in a new ecosystem when it can reproduce and grow rapidly or when the new environment lacks natural predators or pests.

In an aquatic ecosystem, the introduction of an invasive species may decrease recreational opportunities, alter the food chain, affect the quality of fishing, decrease property values and increase costs to manage the waterbody.

To encourage residents to clean and inspect their watercraft, the City of Plymouth partnered with Hennepin County to install a cleaning station at the Parkers Lake boat launch in the summer of 2018.

The following are tips for preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species. For more information, visit dnr.state.mn.us/ais.

- **Clean** all visible aquatic plants, zebra mussels and other organisms from watercraft, trailers and water-related equipment before leaving any water access or shoreland.
- **Drain** all equipment, including the boat, ballast tanks, portable bait containers, motor, draining bilge, livewell and baitwell by removing drain plugs before leaving a water access or shoreline property. Keep



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drain plugs out and water-draining devices open while transporting watercraft.

- **Dispose** of unwanted bait, including minnows, leeches and worms in the trash. It is illegal to release bait into a waterbody or release aquatic animals from one waterbody to another. To keep bait, refill the bait container with bottled or tap water.

Residents asked to remember Recycling Drop-Off Site rules

Plymouth residents and small businesses may use the Recycling Drop-Off Site – located next to the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. – but those who use the site are asked to adhere to the rules.

The site is for recyclable materials only – please do not bring trash, plastic bags, Polystyrene/Styrofoam™, paint, furniture or bulky items to the site. These items cause problems at the recycling plant and incur additional costs.

The site is free for Plymouth residents and small businesses located in Plymouth. It is not open to the general public. For details and acceptable items, visit plymouthmn.gov.



The Recycling Drop-Off Site is for recyclable materials only – no trash, paint, plastic bags, furniture or bulky items are allowed.

Low-cost rain barrels, compost bins available

To promote environmental stewardship, the city has partnered with the Recycling Association of Minnesota to offer low-cost rain barrels and compost bins to residents.

Orders must be placed online at recycleminnesota.org by Thursday, May 9. Orders must be picked up between 8 a.m. and noon Saturday, May 11 at the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N.

Cost to purchase a compost bin through this sale is \$64. Cost to purchase a 45-gallon rain barrel is \$79.

Rain barrels can help conserve water and save money by capturing and reusing rain water for landscaping and other purposes. They also help reduce stormwater runoff, which

can add pollutants to lakes and streams.

Using a compost bin can help reduce household waste by more than 25 percent and prevent it from being dumped into a landfill. Using the material generated by composting is also a natural way to fertilize and add nutrients to gardens and landscaping. For more information, visit plymouthmn.gov.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Free Shredding – 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, May 4, Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. Free paper shredding at Drop-Off Day. Plymouth residents only. For details, visit plymouthmn.gov/dropoff.

Plant Swap – 4:30-6:30 p.m. Mondays, June 3 and Sept. 9, Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. Free. Bring perennials or gardening wares, such as seeds, pots, tools and books, and swap them for new plants.

Plant & Pull Day – Saturday, May 18. Help beautify Plymouth by planting flowering annuals near city parks and facilities during the event, as well as pull the invasive garlic mustard plant in woodland areas. To get involved, email volunteer@plymouthmn.gov.



Volunteers are needed for Plant & Pull Day May 18.