

# 2009 Accomplishment Report – Illinois

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## Introduction

The mission of the Illinois Urban and Community Forestry (IL UCF) Program is to provide information and technical assistance to units of local government and others that will encourage efforts to plan and implement local community forestry programs to plant, protect, maintain, and utilize the wood from trees in their local jurisdictions. Urban and community forestry management integrates natural, social, and economic systems to create a healthy forest resource and a safe environment for Illinois citizens. This mission is achieved by helping communities and other units of local government in the development or expansion of local urban and community forestry programs. Illinois' statewide Urban and Community Forestry Program is part of a nearly \$5 billion green industry in Illinois that serves 80 percent of Illinois' population. Illinois is currently served by 1 FTE through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Programs within the Urban and Community Forestry Program that help IDNR meet the goal of creating local sustainable urban and community forestry programs include Tree City USA and associated programs, emerald ash borer outreach efforts, Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants, Technical Assistance Contracts, and the TREES COUNT! program.

## Key Accomplishments

### Tree City USA Highlights

Illinois celebrated 33 years of participation in the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program this year. The Tree City USA program is the basic foundation of the IL UCF program. The program continues to grow with a total of 191 Illinois Tree City USA communities participating this year. Illinois has now had the second highest ranking in this category in the Nation for 12 years since 1990, topped only by Ohio, which has a full staff of dedicated urban forestry field-based employees. Illinois ranks #1 in the Nation for the number of Tree City USA Growth Award Participants. Illinois UCF Tree City USA efforts alone serve about 7.4 million people, or over 69 percent of Illinois' urban and community residents. Tree City USA is a highly respected and sought after recognition in Illinois. As an indicator of how important this program is to communities, many have integrated Tree City USA as an icon on their community Web sites. One conference was authorized by the State Forester to be held in central Illinois. Total annual attendance to this event was down due to the location and economic and travel constraints.

### Emerald Ash Borer in Illinois

Being on the frontier of the national emerald ash borer infestation means that continued community assistance is needed. The IDNR continues to address emerald ash borer as a component of urban forest management within Illinois communities. The door hanger outreach continued this year with 100,000 additional door hangers being distributed to Illinois communities. The prototype is posted on the Web site

for free access and local use in printing additional door hangers. This outreach has been extremely successful. The Annual TREE CITY USA Conference again invited representatives from APHIS and the Illinois Department of Agriculture to speak.

**Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program**

Not authorized internally in FY09

**Southern and Central Illinois Systematic Approach to Serving Communities**

Not authorized internally in FY09

**TREES COUNT! Northern Illinois Technical Service Initiative**

Not authorized internally in FY09

**Statistical Highlights**

Due to multiple reporting, this information will be provided either at a later date or through a separate reporting system.