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Arbor Day Foundation Names Merrillville a Tree City USA

Merrillville, Indiana, was named a 2012 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation in honor of its commitment to effective urban forest management. This is the 3rd year Merrillville has earned the national designation.

Merrillville achieved Tree City USA recognition by meeting the program's four requirements: a tree board or department, a tree-care ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters.

"Everyone benefits when elected officials, volunteers and committed citizens in communities like Merrillville, make smart investments in urban forests," said John Rosenow, founder and chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation. "Trees bring shade to our homes and beauty to our neighborhoods, along with numerous economic, social and environmental benefits."

Matt Lake, Executive Director of Merrillville Stormwater Utility, said "Trees are a key component of our green infrastructure, and the Tree City USA program recognizes our efforts to manage our urban forest." "As the former IDNR State Urban Forester, I have seen how communities have benefited from proper integration of desirable trees within the urban environment and here in Merrillville, where we have initiated strategies for the past few years to enhance the quality of life through trees", Lake said.

Cleaner air, improved storm water management, energy savings and increased property values and commercial activity are among the benefits enjoyed by Tree City USA communities.

More information on the program is available at arborday.org/TreeCityUSA.

About the Arbor Day Foundation: The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization of one million members, with the mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees. More information on the Foundation and its programs can be found at arborday.org, or by visiting us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or our [blog](#).