

Community Forestry Assistant



Northwest Management, Inc.

Newsletter May 2008

Community Canopy - A Success Story!

Community Canopy is an educational partnership that promotes healthy, sustainable community forests through up-to-date tree care practices. This regional alliance includes the cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, and Post Falls and the Spokane County Conservation District, with assistance from the University of Idaho Extension and Washington State University Extension. The program was initiated in 2003 with a grant from the Idaho Department of



Lands Community Forestry Program in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and Wal-Mart, but currently sustains itself with funding from the contributing partners. Recognizing the value of community trees and the prevalence of failure among new city trees, the members of Community Canopy strive to provide information to those responsible for the planting and long-term care of community trees. To reach the goal of having healthy trees that are growing toward maturity, Community Canopy's emphasis is on planting trees correctly, providing adequate water, and protecting trees from damage by turf equipment including mowers and weed whips. Community Canopy provides exhibits, workshops, and in-the-field training for turf and landscape maintenance workers. Through the assistance of a Tree Care Educator and the Extension Master Gardeners, information and educational opportunities are also offered to churches, businesses, and homeowners associations. Many types of media are employed to reach this audience. Each spring and fall, the *Tree Talk* newsletter is mailed to hundreds of landscape maintenance providers. *Tree Talk* promotes educational opportunities, up-coming events, and the latest information in tree care research. Community Canopy has produced a 12-minute DVD highlighting good tree planting practices and has free copies available to anyone interested. The website www.communitycanopy.org is up and running with the latest news, events, tree care information, and member contacts. The program's Tree Care Educator, Katie Sorensen, can be contacted at (208) 415-0415 to coordinate on-site training sessions for any interested group. The *Landscape of Excellence* recognition award program was recently announced whereby Community Canopy will give public recognition to commercial, retail, church, and subdivision 'commons' properties that exemplify quality landscaping and tree stewardship. Contact the Tree Care Educator or any Community Canopy representative to nominate an exceptional landscape in your community.

In 2008, the partnership members plan to expand the program throughout Kootenai and Spokane Counties, standardize tree planting specifications across jurisdictional boundaries, and substantially increase both the broad audience and specific clientele served by Community Canopy. The program's goal remains to develop and retain healthy, sustainable community forests that provide maximum ecological and social benefits.

If you would like more information, please contact your local Idaho Department of Lands supported North Idaho Community Forestry Assistant, Jim Colla at Northwest Management, Inc. at 208-772-8554.