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Oak Park Earns 24th Tree City USA community recognition award

For the 24th consecutive year, the Village of Oak Park has been named a [Tree City USA community](#) by the Arbor Day Foundation. Even more impressive, officials say, is the [Tree City USA Growth Award](#) that the Village also received – for the 10th time.

"Maintaining a healthy, vibrant canopy in an urban setting such as ours requires vigilance to stay ahead of the environmental and man-made stresses our trees must deal with just to survive, let alone thrive," said Village Forester Jim Semelka.

"Continued recognition as a *Tree City* is important, but the *Growth Award* is a special honor. This award says we are doing something new and innovative each year to improve our urban forest."

The prestigious Growth Award recognizes higher levels of tree care among *Tree City USA* communities, Arbor Day Foundations officials say. Oak Park earned its 10th [Tree City USA Growth Award](#) for its public education efforts to end destructive practices such as volcano mulching, as well as for its tree planting and maintenance programs.

"Trees in our cities and towns help clean the air, conserve soil and water, moderate temperature and bring nature into our daily lives," said John Rosenow, chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation in his announcement of the 2007 *Tree City USA* communities. "A community, and its citizens, that recognize these benefits and provide needed care for its trees deserve recognition and thanks."

Even with 24 consecutive *Tree City USA* awards – and 10 *Growth Awards* – Semelka says Oak Park's urban forest continues to challenge the skills, knowledge and experience of the Forestry Division's arborists who care for the nearly 20,000 trees on public property in the Village.

The *Tree City USA* program is sponsored by the [Arbor Day Foundation](#) in cooperation with the [National Association of State Foresters](#) and the [USDA Forest Service](#).

For more information on the [Village's forestry programs](#), call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.

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