



# Community Canopy

## Fall 2007



**Here We  
Grow Again**  
Forestry Facts



**TREE CITY USA®**

**Applications are Due December 31, 2007!**

Join the 111 communities in Michigan that have earned Tree City USA status. Every community, regardless of size, benefits from becoming a Tree City USA.

A few benefits include increased educational opportunities, public image, citizen pride and publicity as well as potential financial assistance for your community.

For further information, contact Kevin Sayers at 517-241-4632 or [sayersk@michigan.gov](mailto:sayersk@michigan.gov).

### Urban and Community Forestry Council Members:

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### Trees as Biomass Energy

When many people think of *renewable energy*, they think of the wind and sun. However, according to the Energy Information Administration, *biomass* (plant material and animal waste) supplies nearly 15 times as much energy in the United States as wind and solar power combined—and has the potential to supply much more.

There are many types of plants in the world, and many ways they can be used for energy production. In general there are two approaches: growing plants specifically for energy use, and using the residues from plants that are used for other things.

**Trees.** In addition to growing very fast, some trees will grow back after being cut off close to the ground, a feature called "coppicing." Coppicing allows trees to be harvested every three to eight years for 20 or 30 years before replanting. These trees, also called "short-rotation woody crops," grow as much as 40 feet high in the years between harvests. In the cooler, wetter regions of the northern United States, varieties of poplar, maple, black locust, and willow are the best choice.

**Forestry.** One large source of wood waste is tree tops and branches normally left behind in the forest after timber-harvesting operations. Some of these must be left behind to recycle necessary nutrients into the forest and to provide habitat for birds and mammals, but some could be collected for energy production. Other sources of wood waste are woodchips, sawdust and bark from sawmills, shavings produced during the manufacture of furniture, and organic sludge from pulp and paper mills.

*Source: Union of Concerned Scientists*

### Trees and Power Lines

By Robert Taggart  
Line Clearance Coordinator / Utility Forester  
Upper Peninsula Power Company

Have you ever been for a walk in your neighborhood and noticed funny looking trees? Perhaps those trees were missing tops, or one side of the tree was gone, or the middle of the tree had been removed making it resemble a giant "Y". Upon closer inspection you will likely notice a power line in the immediate area. These trees have been pruned to provide clearance from electrical facilities. This is an all too common occurrence and can be avoided with proper planning when planting trees.

There are two main reasons why a power company may prune a tree. The first is SAFETY. When a tree comes in contact with an energized power line, it too can become energized. Anybody unfortunate enough to come into contact with that tree could possibly get electrocuted. Second is reliability. Trees cause up to 40% or more of all power outages. For example, the east coast blackout of 2003 was caused by a tree contacting a transmission line. **Trees and power lines don't mix.**

Remember, "The Right Tree in The Right Place". If you're planting a tree, make sure it won't cause problems with utility lines. Tall growing trees should never be planted near power lines. There are many tree varieties which are appropriate to electrical right-of-ways. Trees like flowering crabapple and hawthorns will only grow to a height of 12-15 feet, thus never encroaching on the wire zone.

If you are thinking about planting trees, please LOOK UP before you start. If you have questions regarding planting trees near electrical facilities, contact your local utility or visit [www.arborday.org/trees/righttreeandplace](http://www.arborday.org/trees/righttreeandplace). They will be happy to help you chose the right tree for the right place...it's much easier than pruning them later.



Michigan Urban Forestry Council  
 Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division  
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## Tool Shed

Forestry tools you can use

**“I will make a palace fit for you and me of green days in forests and blue days at seas.”**

- Robert Louis Stevenson

**I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines.**

- Henry David Thoreau, 1817 - 1862

Tales from the Urban Forest:

<http://www.talesfromurbanforests.org/>

Urban Stormwater Retrofit Practices:

[www.cwp.org/PublicationStore/USRM.htm#usrm3](http://www.cwp.org/PublicationStore/USRM.htm#usrm3)

Watershed Plan Builder:

[www.epa.gov/owow/watershedplanning/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershedplanning/)

Benefits of Urban Street Trees:

[www.walkable.org/download/22\\_benefits.pdf](http://www.walkable.org/download/22_benefits.pdf)

Urban Forestry and Arboriculture Publications:

[www.urbanforestryindex.net](http://www.urbanforestryindex.net)

Trees and Ice Storms:

[http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/forestry/publications/pdf/urban\\_community\\_forestry/trees\\_and\\_ice\\_storms\\_2006.pdf](http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/forestry/publications/pdf/urban_community_forestry/trees_and_ice_storms_2006.pdf)

Northern Tree Selection Website:

<http://orb.at.ufl.edu/TREES/index.html>

## The Watering Can

Tips for planting and care



### River Birch (*Betula nigra*)

**Mature height:** 40 - 50 feet

**Spread:** 25 to 35 feet

**Crown:** oval; pyramidal; upright

**Growth rate:** fast

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Light:** grows in part shade/part sun and full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic; extended flooding; well drained

**Fall color:** yellow

## Fall Pruning – What, When and Why

Thinking about pruning your trees this fall? Below are some helpful things to remember before getting started.

Pruning in fall can stimulate growth that won't have time to harden off before cold weather arrives. Also, pruning wounds may not have time to heal. Here are the general guidelines for routine pruning:

- Prune trees, including fruit trees, in late winter.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs immediately after bloom.
- Prune late-flowering shrubs (blooming in mid to late summer) in late winter or early spring.
- Prune evergreens in winter and early spring; needled evergreens can also take a very modest pruning in early summer.

So what can you prune in fall? It's OK to remove diseased, dead or broken branches any time of the year and especially in fall, when allowing diseased parts to linger on a tree over the winter could cause problems next spring.

Gardeners sometimes prune heavy bleeders like birches and maples in the fall if their sap would drip on sidewalks and patios.

Also, the need to remove branches that could, if laden with snow or ice, interfere with power lines or structures, justifies pruning at any time.

*Source: HGTV.com*

### How to Prune Trees

[www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/howtos/ht\\_prune/prun001.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/howtos/ht_prune/prun001.htm)

### Proper Pruning Techniques

[www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/nursery/430-455/430-455.html](http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/nursery/430-455/430-455.html)

### Pruning Trees in Urban Landscapes

<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/pruning/>

## Proper Mulching

A common, sometimes fatal error, when mulching trees is to pile it around the base like a “volcano”.

**MULCH SHOULD NOT TOUCH THE BARK OF THE TREE!** If it does, it creates a great place for fungus and pests to thrive.

A properly mulched tree will have a 2 to 3 inch layer of mulch in a doughnut shaped ring. The ring should extend out to the tree's drip line if possible.

<http://www.vtfpr.org/urban/mulching.cfm>

**Remember...Doughnuts, NOT Volcanoes**