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Village of Perry  
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## Village of Perry Named a Tree City USA...Again

The Village of Perry, NY, recently received its fifth Tree City USA recognition. The designation, made by the Arbor Day Foundation, recognizes the village's efforts to develop a sustainable urban forest.

As a 2021 Tree City USA, Perry once again met the program's four requirements: a tree board, a tree ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita, and Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

Since its formation in late 2015, the Village of Perry Tree Board has made huge strides in helping to manage the village's existing trees and to increase tree population and diversity. It has received two grants, one of which allowed for an arborist to conduct an inventory of trees and their conditions. That information guides the village's tree management plan.

"Perry is slowly becoming an arboretum, a tree garden of different types of trees grown for display, education and study," said Dr. Daniel Zerbe, chairman of the village's Tree Board. "Arborists recommend street tree diversity as a way to reduce loss from invasive tree pathogens, so the village Tree Board adds a number of new species along our streets every fall and spring."

Working closely with the village's Department of Public Works, the Tree Board has overseen ordering and planting trees to reach its goal of putting roughly 50 trees in the ground annually. Donations from individuals, companies like Complete Payroll and community groups such as the Garden Club and Rotary Club supplement the village's tree purchases.

In 2021 the village removed 19 trees, five in the village park. On the plus side, the village planted 24 trees in spring 2021 and another 20 in the fall. This spring the village plans to plant 30 trees, nine of which will be in the village park.

The village spend \$8.20 per capita on trees, far greater than the \$2 per capita required by the Arbor Day Foundation to qualify as a Tree City USA. Those dollars cover tree purchases, equipment to remove and care for trees, professional tree removal when necessary, and materials, such as water bags, fertilizer, mulch, and stakes, to care for newly planted trees.

"Tree City USA communities see the impact an urban forest has in a community firsthand," said Dan Lambe, Arbor Day Foundation president. "The trees being planted and cared for by Perry residents are ensuring that generations to come will enjoy a better quality of life.

"Over the last few years, it has become increasingly clear of the value and importance that trees hold for our future," Lambe continued. "Cities and towns across the globe are facing challenges when it comes to air quality, water resources, personal health and well-being, and energy use. Perry shows its residents and peers that the community is forward-thinking and eager to combat these issues."

Perry is one of 3,676 Tree City USA communities nationally. The program, begun in 1976, has resulted in nearly 750,000 trees planted in these communities, The Village of Attica is the only other Wyoming County community to have earned the Tree City USA recognition, which must be applied for annually.

Community members are encouraged to participate in the Tree Board's annual Arbor Day event, as well as its first Saturday of the month workdays. The 2022 Arbor Day event is planned for Saturday, June 4, 2022. (Time and location will be announced closer to the date.) Cornell Cooperative Extension educator Don Gasiewicz will present a program on tree pests and pathogens. This builds on his successful 2021 Arbor Day program on pruning.

Tree Board first-Saturday workdays include pruning, weeding, and mulching newly planted community trees. The group meets at the small storage shed behind the village park's maintenance building, accessed off Buckland St. Meeting time is 10 a.m.

If ever there was a time for trees, now is that time. Trees help communities address challenges outlined by Arbor Day Foundation president Lambe. With Tree City USA recognition, the Village of Perry is doing its part to help face these challenges now and in the future.

*Village of Perry Tree Board members: Daniel Zerbe; Steve Deaton, Village DPW Superintendent; Ernie Lawrence, Village Trustee; Ralph Field; Eleanor Jacobs; Felisa McKay; Robin Redding; James Reynolds; Lori Schofield and Karen Wyant.*

