



TreePeople



Save Our Urban Canopy

HOW TO START YOUR OWN COMMUNITY TREE CARE TEAM





Have you ever strolled down your street and thought, “Oof, these trees could use a little TLC?”

It’s not an uncommon experience here in SoCal, where many of our local trees are struggling to survive due to climate change, improper care, or harsh growing conditions.

But the good news is, you can do something about it! **Forming a Community Tree Care Team is a simple and rewarding way to make a big difference, right in your own backyard (or sidewalk strip).**

Here’s how to get started →



Walk and Chart Your Site



Before you jump into tree care, stroll around the block and take note of:

- **Young Trees:** Usually under 25 feet tall and planted in the last 1–4 years, these trees will need extra water early on to help them establish a strong root system.
- **Mature Trees:** While they don't need quite as much care, large, established trees still benefit from a little TLC—especially during dry months. Helping them survive is one of the most important ways to preserve much-needed shade in our communities!
- **Empty Tree Wells** – These are spaces where trees once were (RIP)—but could be future homes for new plantings.

Mark each tree on a map, so your team knows where care is needed!

PRO TIP: Determining the trees' species using an app like iNaturalist will help you better understand their care needs. For example, most native oaks should NOT be watered in the summer, since they're well-adapted to our dry summers and susceptible to over-watering!

Form Your Dream Tree Care Team

To make caring for your local trees easier, gather a group of other nature-lovers who want to help! Rally friends, family, neighbors, scouts, faith groups, or local businesses and give your team a catchy name (bonus points for puns: *The Tree Musketeers?*).

Once you've assembled a solid crew, you can begin gathering supplies like buckets and shovels. Then, pick a day that works for everyone, get outside, and care for some trees!



Water



When it comes to tree TLC, watering is the number one priority—especially in the heat of summer. To know if it's time to water, simply grab a handful of soil near the tree. If it crumbles: **water that tree!** If it sticks together: **it's good for now, no need to water.**

Each tree needs about

**15 GALLONS
PER WEEK**

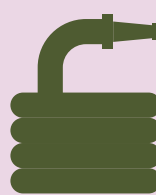
which equals:



15 milk jugs
(1 gallon each)



3 five-gallon buckets



6 minutes with a hose
trickling at the tree base

Remember: **Slow and deep watering is key**—you want those roots to reach down, not stay shallow!



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Weed, Berm, and Mulch

In addition to watering, your tree care crew can also:

- **Weed.** Remove all weeds and turfgrass in a 2–4 feet radius from the tree's trunk. They compete for precious water and nutrients!
- **Build a berm.** Create a little dirt wall with a divot around the baser of the tree. This helps to trap water where it's needed.
- **Mulch.** Add a 3–4 inch layer of mulch about 5–6 inches away from the trunk to help lock in moisture.

Need mulch? Local tree trimmers may deliver it for free. Just make sure it's clean—avoid diseased or palm mulch.

Learn, Share, and Keep Growing

Want to improve your tree care skills or train your team? We've got you covered! Visit our [Save Our Urban Canopy](#) page at the link in bio for more resources to help you care for, protect, and advocate for our urban trees!

