The Minnesota Tree Care Advocate Program  
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Tree Care Advisor
The Tree Care Advisor program trains and mentors citizen volunteers in urban and community forestry. Tree Care Advisors are trained in planting, pruning, plant selection, as well as a host of other activities that are involved in urban and community forestry. Each new core course permits twenty five new members every year that receive 36 hours of classroom and laboratory training and instruction. The next training is the spring of 2015 in Saint Paul.

Tree Care Advisors are required to accumulate 12 hours of education every three years to renew their commitment to the Tree Care Advisor program. Within those three years, out of those 12 hours they are required for update training, they will attend the Best Planting Practices workshops where they will gain more practice on box cutting, determining correct planting depths as well as other new techniques and technology. Best Planting Practices is offered as a hands-on class as well as a distance learning opportunity.

Citizen Pruner
Citizen Pruner is a program that works directly with a community to discover their pruning needs and how citizen volunteers can help fill them. The Citizen Pruner program is then unique to that community and trains volunteers in the art and science of pruning a tree, most commonly relegated to removing suckers and watersprouts and smaller branches that block sight lines on boulevards and park properties. Current Citizen Pruner communities include Rochester, Sherburne County, Shakopee, and St. Paul, for a total of nearly 60 Citizen Pruner volunteers.

Figure 1. Basswood suckers blocking the sight lines at a street intersection. Citizen Pruners remove the suckers in this instance.
Figure 2. Citizen Pruners at a community pruning project in Rochester, MN removing suckers from a maple tree in a public park.

Figure 3. One Rochester pruning project nearing completion.

For more information on these programs or to see how your community can get involved contact Valerie Price at price301@umn.edu or go to www.mntca.org