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For seventh year, Franklin recognized as Tree City USA

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Staff Writer

For the seventh year, Franklin Township has been named a Tree City USA by The National Arbor Day Foundation. For Arbor Day 2008, the township's Shade Tree Commission planted trees in Middlebush Park.

"As Franklin's newest park, and with plans for expansion, Middlebush park provides ample opportunities to plant new trees to shade play equipment and accent park features," said Michael Orsini, chairman of the Shade Tree Commission. "Every year, we plant more trees in Franklin's parks and open space. We strongly emphasize public education, and a wealth of information is available on the municipal Web site, such as the dangers of overmulching trees and the best trees to plant in our climate and soil. Our annual tree sale also has raised public awareness of our mission and is proving increasingly popular."

To become a Tree City USA, a community must meet four standards: it must have a tree board or department, a tree-care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program and an Arbor Day observance.

"Franklin Township is proud to have again been designated Tree City USA, and we thank the members of Franklin's Shade Tree Commission and volunteers for their work in our forestry program," said Mayor Brian Levine. "We also want to thank The National Arbor Day Foundation for this recognition."

The Arbor Day Foundation, in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service, sponsors the Tree City USA program.

"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, president of the National Arbor Day Foundation. "Trees are a vital component of the infrastructure in our towns and cities, and provide many environmental and economical benefits. A community and its citizens that recognize these benefits and provides needed care for its trees, deserves recognition and thanks."
