



# Community Tree Planting During COVID-19

*Be Safe, Keep Planting!*

Forestry Topic 54

[www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov)

January 2021

There are many resources available to instruct communities on tree planting activities — the way we plant a tree doesn't change! However, the ways we plan and implement community tree planting projects has changed significantly in response to the COVID-19 health crisis. Tree planting projects that involve the community can still be safe, fun experiences if planners and participants take extra precautions.

Planning these events during COVID-19 requires special consideration for safety procedures, as well as adherence to local, state and federal guidelines and mandates. These protocols are in place to protect people from spreading germs through coughing, sneezing or touching common objects.



The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) has developed this brief guide to demonstrate recommended best practices for planning community tree planting projects during COVID-19.



## VDOF's COVID-19 Response

- Protect the health and safety of staff.
- Protect the health and safety of the public during encounters with VDOF staff.
- Maintain normal operations to the best of our abilities.

**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019**  
(COVID-19)



Patients with COVID-19 have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

\*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

[cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms](https://cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms)

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## Before the Event

- Recruit local volunteers and encourage family groups to volunteer together.
- Have participants complete an online registration to gather full and complete contact information.
- Remind participants to not attend if they've exhibited any symptoms of illness in the past 14 days (e.g., fever, cough, etc.).

## Event Setup

- Set up a self-registration table or touchless sign-in via text message upon arrival.
- Limit group size and stagger volunteer arrival times.
- Require participants to complete an attestation form about symptoms of illness and contact with known COVID-positive persons.
- Put up appropriate COVID-19 signage, available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html>
- Stage tools, trees, and supplies in dispersed areas to avoid congregation.
- Give group instruction while maintaining safe social distance.
- Ask volunteers to bring their own supplies, but have gloves and disposable masks as back up.

## During Planting

- Have a leader to designate key tasks for each person, such as digging holes, planting, watering and installing.
- Put someone in charge of sanitizing tools.
- Monitor participants to ensure they maintain appropriate social distancing protocols.

## Supplies for Planting Day

Planting	Health & Safety
Folding Table for Registration Station	COVID-19 Advisory Signage
Sign-in Forms, Clip Board & Name Tags	Extra Masks & Gloves
Shelters, Stakes & Nets (Bare Root Trees)	Hand Sanitizer
Cages, Stakes & Straps (Large Trees)	Cleaning Supplies to Sanitize Tools*
Tools (shovels, spades, rakes, pruners, etc.)	Tape Measure (to Mark 6-ft Distance)
Plant Materials	Paper Towels
Spray Paint or Survey Flags	Tissues
	Touchless Trash Can
Water for Trees	First Aid Kit

\*EPA recommended disinfectants:

<https://cfpub.epa.gov/giwiz/disinfectants/index.cfm>



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