

# CALIFORNIA ReLeaf SAVE OUR WATER



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## URBAN FOREST GROUPS JOIN WITH SAVE OUR WATER TO HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF TREE CARE THIS SUMMER

*Proper tree care vital to protect urban canopy during extreme drought*

**Sacramento, CA** – With millions of urban trees in need of extra care due to extreme drought, Save Our Water – the State of California’s water conservation campaign – is partnering with [California ReLeaf](#) and urban forest groups across the state to bring awareness to the importance of tree care while cutting back on our outdoor water use. As Californians curb outdoor water use, paying extra attention to trees is vital to preserving our urban tree canopy.

The [partnership](#), which includes the USDA Forest Service, CAL FIRE’s Urban & Community Forestry Department as well as local groups, highlights how to properly water and care for trees so that they not only survive the drought, but thrive to provide shade, beauty and habitat, clean the air and water, and make our cities and towns healthier and more livable for decades to come.

“With Californians cutting back on their outdoor water use and irrigation this summer to help protect our water supplies, it is critical that we continue to properly care for our trees,” said Cindy Blain, Executive Director of California ReLeaf. “Our urban forest canopy is important for our environmental and community health so we must do what we can to save our water and our trees.”

Trees in irrigated landscapes become dependent on regular watering and when watering is reduced – especially when it’s stopped completely – trees can become stressed and die. Tree loss is a very costly problem, not only in expensive tree removal, but in the loss of all the benefits trees provide: cooling and cleaning the air and water, shading homes, walkways and recreation areas, and protecting public health.

**Follow these simple steps for proper drought tree care this summer:**

1. Deeply and slowly water mature trees 1 to 2 times per month with a simple soaker hose or drip system toward the edge of the tree canopy – NOT at the base of the tree. Use a hose faucet timer (found at hardware stores) to prevent overwatering.
2. Young trees need 5 gallons of water 2 to 4 times per week, depending on your region and weather. Create a small watering basin with a berm or rounded mound of dirt.
3. Use recycled water to care for your trees. Shower with a bucket and use that water for trees and plants, as long as it is free of non-biodegradable soaps or shampoos. Be sure to alternate recycled and non-recycled water to address potential salinity concerns.
4. Be careful to not over-prune trees during drought. Too much pruning and drought stress your trees.
5. Mulch, Mulch, MULCH! 4 to 6 inches of mulch helps retain moisture, reducing water needs and protecting your trees.
6. Watch the weather and let Mother Nature handle watering if rain is in the forecast. And remember, trees require different watering schedules than other plants and landscaping.

“As Californians cut back on outdoor water use, remembering to put extra care into trees will ensure our urban forests remain strong throughout this extreme drought,” said Walter Passmore, State Urban Forester for CAL FIRE. “Saving water this summer is imperative, and we must be smart about when and how we use this precious resource. Keeping established trees alive using drought-smart tree care guidelines should be part of everyone’s water budget.”

For more information on how Californians can take action today to save water, visit [SaveOurWater.com](http://SaveOurWater.com).

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**About California ReLeaf:** California ReLeaf works statewide to promote alliances among community-based groups, individuals, industry, and government agencies, encouraging each to contribute to the livability of our cities and the protection of our environment by planting and caring for trees. Learn more at [www.CaliforniaReLeaf.org](http://www.CaliforniaReLeaf.org)

**About Save Our Water:** Save Our Water is California’s statewide water conservation program. Started in 2009 by the California Department of Water Resources, Save Our Water’s goal is to make water conservation a daily habit among Californians. The program reaches millions of Californians each year through partnerships with local water agencies and other community-based organizations, social marketing efforts, paid and earned media and event sponsorships. Please visit [SaveOurWater.com](http://SaveOurWater.com) and follow @saveourwater on Twitter and @SaveOurWaterCA on Facebook.

**About California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE):** The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) serves and safeguards the people and protects the property and resources of California. CAL FIRE’s Urban & Community Forestry Program works to expand and improve the management of trees and related vegetation in communities throughout California and leads the effort to advance the development of sustainable urban and community forests.

**About the USDA Forest Service:** The Forest Service manages 18 national forests in the Pacific Southwest Region, which encompasses over 20 million acres across California, and assists state and private forest landowners in California, Hawaii and

the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. National forests supply 50 percent of the water in California and form the watershed of most major aqueducts and more than 2,400 reservoirs throughout the state. For more information, visit [www.fs.usda.gov/R5](http://www.fs.usda.gov/R5)

**About City Plants:** City Plants is a non-profit partner founded by the City of Los Angeles that distributes and plants nearly 20,000 trees each year. The organization works alongside city, state, federal and six local non-profit partners to transform LA's neighborhoods and grow an urban forest that will protect vulnerable communities for future generations, so all neighborhoods have equal access to trees and their benefits of clean air, better health, cooling shade, and friendlier, more vibrant communities

**About Canopy:** Canopy is a nonprofit that plants and cares for trees where people need them the most, growing urban tree canopy in San Francisco Midpeninsula communities for over 25 years, so every resident of the Midpeninsula can step outside, play, and thrive under the shade of healthy trees. [www.canopy.org](http://www.canopy.org).

**About the Sacramento Tree Foundation:** The Sacramento Tree Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to growing livable and lovable communities from seed to slab. Learn more at [sactree.org](http://sactree.org).

**About California Urban Forest Council:** California Urban Forests Council knows that trees and water are both precious resources. Trees make our houses feel like home – they also improve property values, clean our water & air, and even make our streets safer & quieter. When we water wisely and maintain our trees carefully, we enjoy a wide range of long-term benefits at a low cost and with little effort. Be water-wise. It's easy. We're here to help! [www.caufc.org](http://www.caufc.org)