

Mayor Scott Avedisian announced today that the National Arbor Day Foundation has named Warwick a Tree City USA for the eleventh consecutive year.

The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation, in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service. The city was awarded the designation because it has again successfully met the four standards of a Tree City: have a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program, and an Arbor Day observance.

In addition to these initiatives and the city's annual tree planting/beautification program, since the spring of 2005, approximately one acre at the city-owned Barton Farm has been dedicated as a "pot-in-pot" tree farm. Utilizing this technology, the city designed and built a farm designed to harvest approximately 100 trees per year. The trees are purchased as bare root stock, potted up and grown for up to two years, depending on species. When trees are ready for harvest they are planted on public properties by employees from Planning and the Department of Public Works. The pot is simply returned to the tree farm and new bare root stock is then planted and grown out.

The tree farm offers the city many advantages, including lower cost per tree; more control over available species (for example, the ability to grow smaller species that can be planted under utility wires); better ease of planting; and lower mortality rates because tree farm trees are planted with 100 percent of their root ball intact.

The city also works with groups on Arbor Day ceremonies and other tree planting programs. For example, last weekend, the Rhode Island Tree Council, in cooperation with National Grid and the Arpin Group, planted over 100 trees at City Park.

"We commend Warwick's elected officials, volunteers and its citizens for providing vital care for its urban forest," said John Rosenow, chief executive and founder of the Arbor Day Foundation. "Trees provide numerous environmental, economical and health benefits to millions of people each day, and we applaud communities that make planting and caring for trees a top priority."

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