



OUR EARTH

Our Town, Our Future

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The Community Forest

Hailey Considers Tree Ordinance

The Mayor and City Council have endorsed a Tree Ordinance recognizing the value that trees bring to our community—shade, reduced carbon dioxide, increased property values and reduced energy costs for homes surrounded by mature trees. This ordinance will open the door to “Tree City USA” status which will provide grant funding for tree maintenance and public education of the benefits of a healthy community forest.

Hailey’s Tree Ordinance, set for adoption on August 11th, will regulate maintenance, planting and removal of trees *on public property*, (street rights-of-way and parks). The Tree Ordinance *will not regulate trees on private property*, (trees in your yard). Although we treasure “historic” trees that have been a part of the fabric of our community for decades, the city cannot regulate planting or removal of trees on private property. The only instance that the city would get involved with a private tree would be if it were to present a threat to public safety or in danger of spreading a disease to public trees.

A successful Tree Ordinance helps the city maintain its own trees in a professional manner, and does not regulate what citizens can or cannot do with trees on their property. While the city requires species diversity from commercial development and within its own city parks, the city can only recommend that citizens follow guidelines to plant and maintain a diverse and healthy community forest. The “Hailey Tree Selection & Planting Guide” is an excellent resource and is available on the City’s website at haileycityhall.org/planning/treepltggd.pdf. The Hailey Tree Committee will be developing a Community Forest Plan; if you are interested in serving on this committee, email Becki Keefer, Parks Project Coordinator, at b.keefe@cox.net.

Water Conservation

Community Concern is Showing

Hailey homeowners are paying more attention to the water they use and it shows. This spring was cool and wet compared to last year and many homeowners held off on their irrigation until they felt their lawns actually needed moisture. Combined with conservation practices, the residents of Hailey used approximately 40% less water in May and June than in the previous year. Both July 2007 and July 2008 have been hot and dry; this year residents and businesses have used 8% less water!

Have You Noticed?

The City Parks Department is also closely observing their water usage. Following a water audit of several city parks, the irrigation monitors have been set back on all city parks in an effort to create a more sustainable park system. Close attention is paid to the timing of park watering, the repair and effectiveness of the spray heads and the possibilities of varied planting choices in specific areas. Because parks take more traffic than most residential lawns, some special planning must be done to help the grass survive heavy traffic days. For example, watering was suspended prior to and during the July 4th antique show at McKercher Park. Extra water was applied to help the grass revive after the three-day event. The right amount of water applied when needed is a primary means of maintaining sustainable parks for the community.

Suggestions for a Water-Wise Yard

Mow the lawn to three inches to help protect the roots from the day’s heat. Water only when it is needed. Mulch all beds with up to two inches of wood chips or partially composted organics. Turn sprinklers down or off as days cool or rain falls. See how little water you can use!

Hailey Environmental Leadership Program (HELP)

Helping Ourselves, Our Community, and Our Earth