

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteers sought for TreeKeepers Program

COLUMBIA, MO (February 1, 2005) -- Residents of Columbia who want to learn more about trees and have an interest in trees in city parks, along trails and in city right-of-way are invited to participate in the TreeKeepers volunteer program.

TreeKeeper participants attend a six-week course in tree management, including information on planting, pruning, tree diseases and tree pests. The course, held each Tuesday from Feb. 22 through March 29 from 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., will be taught by representatives from the city of Columbia, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the University of Missouri. The course will also include hands-on labs where participants will learn about tree pruning and planting. Classes will be held at the Parks Management Center, 1507 Business Loop 70 West.

In exchange for the educational component of the program, participants are required to volunteer 36 hours working on tree projects in city parks, along trails, at the city nursery and along city right-of-way.

The TreeKeepers program was created in 1997 as a partnership between the city's Office of Volunteer Services, Parks & Recreation Department and the Missouri Department of Conservation. Since the program began, over 150 volunteers have given nearly 6,000 hours of service.

For more information on becoming a TreeKeeper, contact the city of Columbia's Office of Volunteer Services at 874-7499 or e-mail volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com. Details are also available on the city's Web site at www.GoColumbiaMo.com.