

National Arbor Day is April 29th, 2016. Let's get together and celebrate the importance of trees!

HISTORY: The first American Arbor Day was celebrated in Nebraska City, Nebraska. Among the pioneers moving into the Nebraska Territory in 1854 was Julius Sterling Morton. He and his wife, Caroline, were lovers of nature. Morton soon became editor of Nebraska's first newspaper. He spread agricultural information and his enthusiasm for trees. His fellow pioneers missed their trees and needed them for windbreaks, fuel, building materials and shade from the hot prairie sun. Morton encouraged everyone to set aside a day to plant trees. In 1872 the State Board of Agriculture declared setting one day to plant trees and called it Arbor Day. Other states followed, and today, all 50 states celebrate Arbor Day.

Arbor Day reflects a hope for the future and the trees planted show a concern for future generations. The trees planted will someday provide wildlife habitat, erosion control, shelter from the wind and sun, beauty, and inspiration for us and our children.

HOW TREES HELP THE ENVIROMENT: Trees create an ecosystem to provide habitat and food for birds and other animals. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and potentially harmful gasses, such as sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, from the air and release oxygen. They mark our seasons, they cool the streets and cities, and they help prevent soil erosion, provide wood, and provide beauty.

THE ASHAROKEN VILLAGE ARBOR DAY EVENT: On October 29th 2012 Tropical Storm Sandy hit the Village of Asharoken. The storm's tidal surge and high winds carrying salt spray battered the Village destroying beach dunes and many beautiful trees including the two main trees that stood beside our Chief Asharoken statue. The Village applied for an Arbor Day Grant supported and provided by the NYSDEC Division of Lands and Forests. The grant was for \$1,000 to be used to celebrate the meaning of Arbor Day and replant trees.

The Village selected two trees to be planted; the first tree is called a **River Birch (Betula nigra)** tree. It prefers colder climates, is moderately salt tolerant, has diamond-shaped leaves and usually grows near water. The bark has a silvery gray color with light reddish-brown patches. This tree will be planted in the center planting bed in front of Village Hall.

The second tree is called a **Colorado Blue Spruce (Picea Pungens)** tree. The silvery blue-green coloring results from a waxy coating on the needles, making it salt

tolerant. It has a perfect Christmas tree shape which makes this tree a great landscaping focal point. It grows well in moist, rich, sandy well-drained and clay soils, and is used as a windbreak. This tree will be planted on the left side of Village Hall.

The Village is providing “**Pitch Pine**” (**Pinus Rigida**) seedlings. Pitch Pine is a medium-sized tree with moderately strong, coarse-grained wood. Pitch Pine is most common on the sandy soils of Cape Cod and Long Island. The climate in the range of Pitch Pine is humid and grows on sites with a wide range of moisture conditions. In New England it is most common in the coastal districts.

Steps for planting a tree seedling:

1. Dig a fairly straight hole from 8 to 10 inches deep and from 4-to 5 inches square.
2. Remove only one seedling at a time from its package or planting bag.
3. Insert the root system to the bottom of the hole, and then slightly lift up the seedling to its desired planting depth.
4. Hold the seedling upright while closing the hole. Gently pack the soil with your hands.
5. Provide water to your seedling every couple of days. Do not soak the soil, but allow the soil to dry out a little on the top, then add more water.
6. The seedling does not need a lot of extra nutrients, but after several days adding a little liquid fertilizer to the water is helpful, but not at full strength.

TREE ORDINANCE: The Village of Asharoken has its own tree ordinance. It covers all living trees and has certain restrictions to the removal of trees based on the size of the tree. If the tree is within 15 feet of any structure, it can be removed without any prior approvals. The tree ordinance helps protect the trees in our area, if certain trees have to be removed for construction the Village encourages the replanting of new trees, preferably native species.

NATIVE TREES: Some of the native trees in our area include Paper Birch, Grey Birch, American Holly, Eastern Red Cedar, Larch, Pitch Pine, Beach Plum, White Oak, Red Oak, Pin Oak and Blue Spruce.

NYSDEC DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS: Many thanks to the NYSDEC for supporting this Arbor Day Event and providing the funding to help Asharoken re-plant the trees they lost during Sandy.

**Trees are our planet's lungs, look around and look up to
our trees!**