

Dear Residents,

Happy Arbor Day!

Many of us are seeing new faces in town; in addition to the new developments adjacent to the Riverline station, the red-hot real estate market has attracted some folks who have only recently discovered Delanco and decided to make it their home. To all our new residents, the Delanco Shade Tree Commission extends a hearty Welcome! We hope you will take as much pride in our community as we do. Which brings us to the point of this letter.

The Delanco Shade Tree Commission (DSTC) is responsible for managing our community forest. “What forest?” you may ask. Well, compared to many of our neighboring communities, Delanco has a fairly extensive network of trees lining the streets, and on the various public parks and spaces scattered throughout our town. Many of them were planted before we were born.

The DSTC has a Community Forestry Management Plan that is reviewed and approved by the NJDEP Dept. of Parks and Forests every 5 years. The DSTC has a Licensed Tree Expert, Kevin Scibilia, who provides guidance and recommendations to the DSTC. We also have a rather comprehensive ordinance delegating responsibility for Delanco’s Public Trees. It also includes significant penalties for violations.

Unfortunately, with Spring finally upon us, and folks venturing out to get some much-needed relief from the pandemic, we’ve seen far too many instances of residents (or their contractors) taking it upon themselves to prune, or in some cases even remove street trees. Please, please, please DO NOT prune, cut, kill, or otherwise harm street trees. We have seen way too many instances of removals, improper pruning, and mulching of street trees. These unsightly, illegal acts damage the tree, creating additional work for our public works staff, and often lead to a diseased and dangerous tree requiring



expensive outside contractors to remediate. And guess who pays for that work- as tax payers, we all do. *(The photo above is an example of “What NOT to do to a Township Shade Tree”)*

Such actions can also lead to civil actions against violators, with resultant court appearances and substantial fines.

So, if you have a question about or issue with a street tree, please file a work request on the DSTC website; <http://www.delancotownship.com/content/5298/6472/6883/default.aspx> or feel free to show up at one our monthly public meetings.

If you would like to learn more about the value of trees in urban environments, or trees in general, please check out the following websites:

<https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/forest/community/>

www.Arborday.org