



## Tree Planting Initiative Launched, Discounts for MD Citizens

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On April 1, Governor Martin O'Malley launched the new citizen component of Marylanders Plant Trees, a program designed to greatly increase tree cover across the State.

“What to some may be the seemingly small action of planting a tree actually has a substantial impact on our ecosystem,” said Governor O'Malley. “Our new citizen program will enable citizens, who may not otherwise have been able to participate, to support local businesses, and do their part to think “globally and act locally” to create a smarter, greener, more sustainable future for our State.”

Through Marylanders Plant Trees, the State is partnering with businesses, communities and citizens to help fund and plant new tree cover: State agencies have a goal of planting 1 million new trees by 2011, and private citizens are being asked to plant 50,000 trees by 2010. The program, which also includes several longer term goals, is part of Smart, Green & Growing, a statewide initiative to involve every Marylander in creating a more sustainable future.

“Forests are our most strategically important natural resource,” said Maryland Department of Natural Resources Secretary John Griffin. “In addition to protecting water quality, cleaning our air and providing wildlife habitat, one large tree can eliminate 5,000 gallons of stormwater runoff from our beloved Chesapeake Bay each year. Well placed trees can also help reduce energy costs for citizens by 15 to 35 percent.”

To encourage citizen participation, the State is offering \$25 discount coupons for the purchase of native trees costing \$50 or more. Whether taking advantage of the coupon program or not, citizens who plant new trees are asked to use the State's new website, [www.trees.maryland.gov](http://www.trees.maryland.gov) – which offers valuable planting advice -- to register the trees they've planted and calculate their benefits. Soon they will also be able to site individual trees on their property on an interactive map.

“This program will benefit our citizens, our environment and our businesses,” said Governor O'Malley. “And as with our BayStat and GreenPrint programs, interactive technology will allow citizens to track our collective progress.”

The Governor recognized Maryland Attorney General Doug Gansler and the Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association for making the coupon program -- which is modeled after Baltimore County's Growing Home Program -- possible in this difficult economic climate. The State cost of \$20 per coupon will be funded with \$480,000 in settlement dollars from a major power generator for Clean Air Act violations – an agreement which stipulated these dollars be used to fund projects like tree planting which benefit air quality. Maryland's participating tree vendors have generously agreed to absorb the remaining \$5

cost.

”These funds must be spent on mitigation activities to reduce pollution,” said Attorney General Gansler. “Trees work year round, everyday to absorb harmful pollutants in the air we breathe, and I am pleased that my office can play a role in this important program.”

“The Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association is honored to help promote this program; its goals align with those of our member companies and we are very pleased that many of our retail members have chosen to participate in Marylander's Plant Trees,” said Don Riddle, President of Homestead Gardens. “Not only will the planting of trees contribute to a cleaner environment, it will also produce a more beautiful state landscape.”

Co-sponsored by the Parole Rotary Club and DNR’s TREE-mendous Maryland Program, Tyler Heights students and guests planted a total of 16 trees as part of a day-long celebration of Arbor Day, Earth Day and outdoor learning. A Maryland Conservation Corps crew assisted with the plantings.

To increase forestation on publicly owned lands, such as state parks, DNR is working in partnership with the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the Maryland Department of Transportation to engage inmates in planting 1 million new trees by 2011. These plantings are scheduled to begin this Thursday, April 2.