

Program #10018C - Tree Memorial

FY 2024 Adopted

Department: Nondepartmental **Program Contact:** John Wasitynski
Program Offer Type: New **Program Offer Stage:** Adopted
Related Programs:
Program Characteristics: One-Time-Only Request

Executive Summary

The June 2021 Heat Dome event resulted in 69 deaths from hyperthermia. Later that same summer, during a subsequent heat wave, another 3 people died from extreme heat, for a total of 72 deaths. These tragic deaths highlight the dangers posed by human-caused climate change, with extreme heat being just one manifestation of a global crisis. These funds will be used to plant one tree for each person who died from heat in the summer of 2021. Tree’s will be planted in low tree canopy urban areas in the community, particularly areas identified as heat islands, eventually helping to lower ambient temperatures.

Program Description

Prior to June 2021, the highest temperature ever recorded in usually temperate Multnomah County was 107 degrees Fahrenheit, which happened in 1965 and again in 1981. Between June 25 and June 30, 2021, the county shattered that record with temperatures of 108, 112, and 116 degrees over three consecutive days. Temperatures remained high overnight during this period, providing little relief. Warm overnight temperatures over consecutive days — when homes and apartments without air conditioning do not cool down at night — are a primary driver of heat related illness, hospital visits and deaths during extreme heat events.

The extreme heat led to both an unprecedented response by the County and an unprecedented loss of life. Despite the largest sheltering operation for a heat event in our history, the Multnomah County Medical Examiner’s data indicated that 72 people succumbed to hyperthermia in 2021. The majority of those who died were older, white and living alone in apartment buildings. In the County’s “June 2021 Extreme Heat Event Preliminary Finding” report, planting trees in areas with low tree canopy and high urban heat island impacts was identified as a key long-term intervention necessary to protect the community from future heat events.

The June 2021 severe heat event would have been virtually impossible without human-caused global warming. Researchers have estimated that the extraordinary temperatures were a once-in-1,000-year event. However, if current greenhouse gas emissions continue, an event this extreme could happen every five to 10 years by the year 2040. The purpose of this program-offer is to both honor the lives of those who died as a result of the excessive heat and reduce the risk for others during future events. The trees will be planted by community members during a tree planting memorial event.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budgeted	FY23 Estimate	FY24 Offer
Output	Host one volunteer planting and memorial event with 50 volunteers.	N/A	N/A	N/A	200 hours
Outcome	Plant 72 trees	N/A	N/A	N/A	72

Performance Measures Descriptions

Output - 50 volunteers for 4 hours, for a total of 200 hours.
 Outcome - Plant 72 street trees or yard trees that are close to the street.

Legal / Contractual Obligation

The County will look to procure services for street tree planting and for organizing a community memorial and tree planting event. The County and contracting partner will recruit property owners who will not only welcome a street tree adjacent to their property, but who are specifically committed to caring for a memorial tree.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds
Program Expenses	2023	2023	2024	2024
Contractual Services	\$0	\$0	\$32,200	\$0
Total GF/non-GF	\$0	\$0	\$32,200	\$0
Program Total:	\$0		\$32,200	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: