

Report of Minnesota Tree Care Advisor Activities – 2009.

2009: Recruiting.

In 2009 two Tree Care Advisor (TCA) core courses were held. The first was the traditional late winter core course in Saint Paul. The Saint Paul core course graduated 19 TCAs of which one paid the non-volunteer rate. That person has subsequently reported volunteer hours indicating how strong the commitment can be to this program. The second core course was held in Rochester in late 2009 with the help of Rochester's city forester Jacob Ryg and Extension Educator Angie Gupta. The Rochester core course graduated 21 TCAs.

This brings the number of individuals trained across Minnesota to 292.

2009: Where are the TCAs – A breakdown by County.

County	Number of TCAs		County	Number of TCAs
Anoka	29		Blue Earth	6
Brown	2		Carver	10
Chippewa	1		Chisago	2
Cook	1		Cottonwood	2
Dakota	38		Dodge	1
Douglas	4		Faribault	1
Goodhue	3		Hennepin	55
Isanti	1		Le Sueur	2
Mower	1		Murray	2
Nicollet	4		Olmsted	28
Ottertail	1		Pine	1
Ramsey	33		Redwood	2
Renville	1		Rice	4
Saint Louis	1		Scott	2
Sherburne	2		Stearns	1
Washington	31		Watonwan	1
Winona	10		Wright	7
Yellow Medicine	2			
			Total	292

Table 1: Counties where TCAs reside.

2009: Activity breakdown by county.

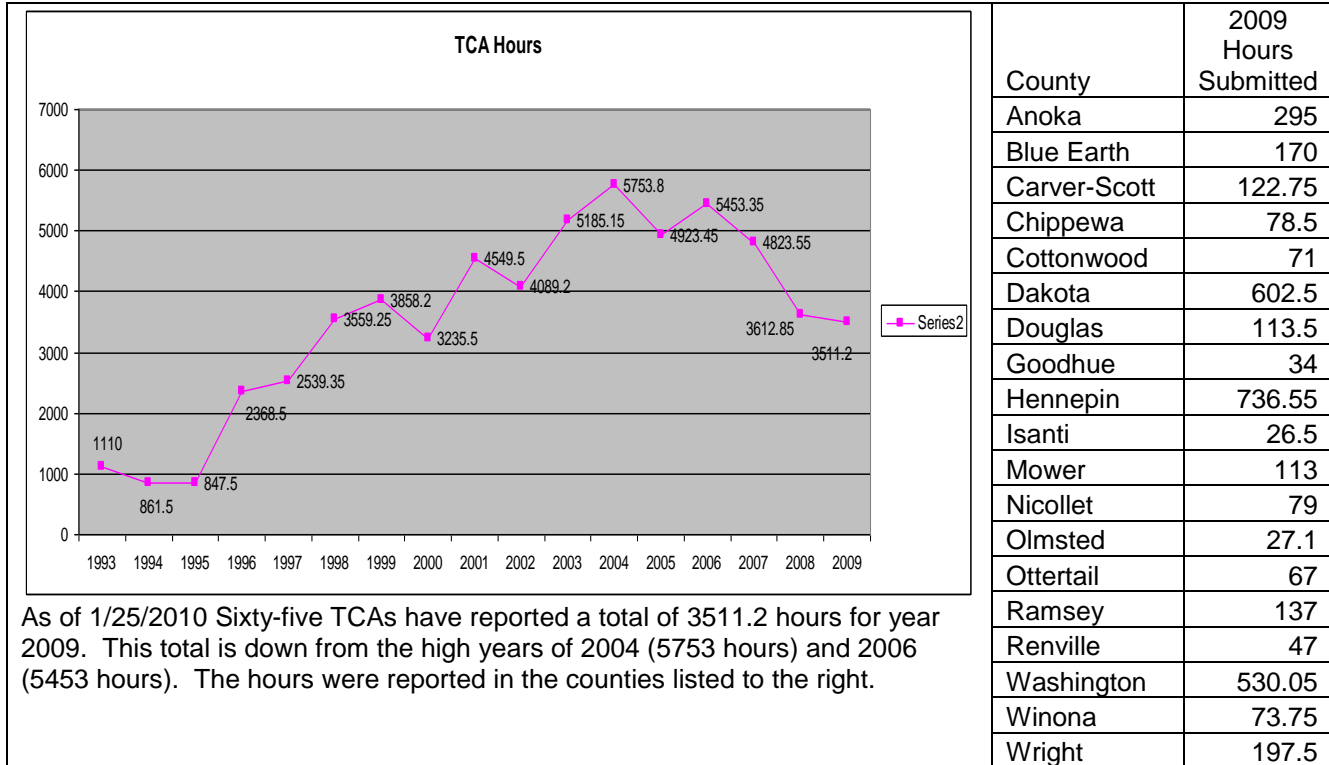


Figure 1: TCA hours by year since 1993.

Table 2: Hours reported in 2009 listed by County of origin.

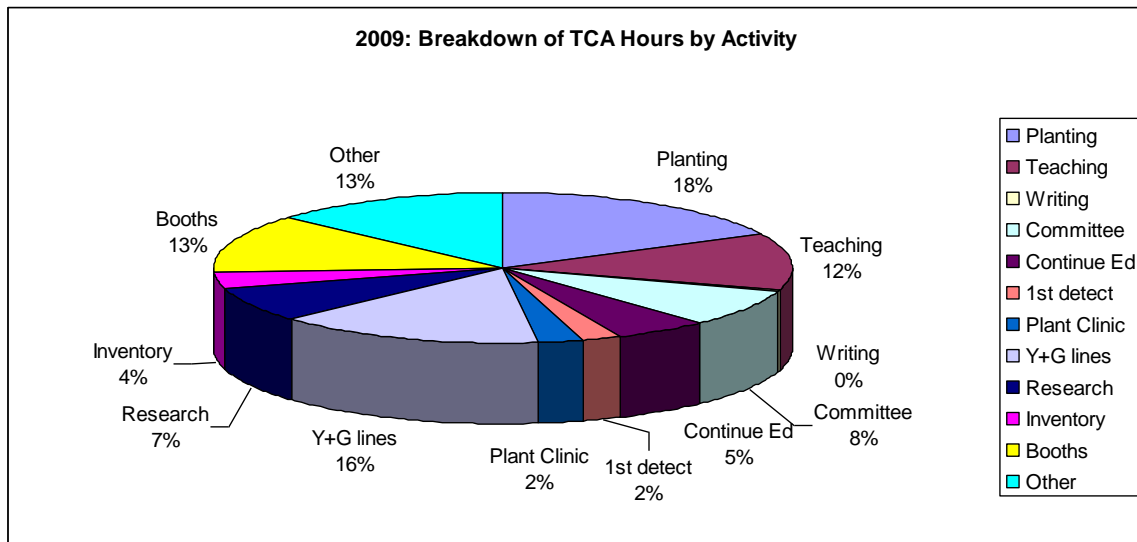


Figure 2: Breakdown of TCA hours by activity.

Figure 2 and the text on pages 3 and 4 describe activities that Tree Care Advisors have been involved in traditionally. Three new categories have been added; First detector, Research, and Inventory.

Planting hours include: landscape design, tree maintenance activities such as pruning and winter care, planting, tree selection and other similar activities...some private consultations on selection and design questions.

Teaching hours include: presentations to many groups including senior citizens to youth education. The venues are just as variable including county and state fairs, professional conferences to venues such as community education. This category includes prep time.

Writing hours: Writing Articles (newspaper, newsletter), preparing display boards, Video sessions for local channels, Radio call-in shows...

Committee hours: Tree boards or various committee work sessions and planning sessions for various activities are in this category. Master Gardener update meetings and Advisory group meetings are included here also.

Continuing education: Various educational opportunities are available to Tree Care Advisors such as the Shade Tree Short Course, TCA updates, MG updates, and other conferences and workshops.

First detector hours: This is a new category in 2009 and includes site visits specifically aimed at emerald ash borer EAB diagnostic work.

Plant diagnostic hours: There are two approaches to plant diagnostics...
- **1** - Home visits – Olmsted, Ottertail, Wright and Blue Earth counties are some of the counties where there are TCAs willing and comfortable doing home visits to help with insect and disease diagnosis.
- **2** - Plant clinics – most of the metro counties hold some type of plant clinic...
Yard and Garden lines and web based systems are handled separately.

Research hours: Tree care advisors are often involved in plant trials (UMORE Park, TRE) or other research support activities on University of Minnesota projects.

Inventory hours: Tree care advisors have begun reporting tree inventory activities.

Yard and Garden phone lines or websites – Phone and web based Master Gardener activities handling consumer questions involving diagnostic work and tree maintenance questions.

Booths: Usually larger blocks of time at fairs, home shows, garden centers and various community events.

Other: Activities that do not fit the categories outlined above or hours that were uncategorized.

2009: Discussion of hours reported.

As of 1/25/2010 Sixty-five TCAs have reported a total of 3511.2 hours for year 2009. As a side note: over the past three years 117 TCAs residing in the counties listed in Table 3 have reported 11,896 hours.

Anoka	Blue Earth	Brown	Carver
Chippewa	Chisago	Cook	Cottonwood
Dakota	Douglas	Goodhue	Hennepin
Isanti	Le Sueur	Mower	Nicollet
Olmsted	Ottertail	Ramsey	Renville
Scott	Washington	Winona	Wright
Yellow Medicine			

Table 3: Counties where reporting TCAs reside.

In addition to reporting these hours to the Tree Care Advisor program, many TCAs are often reporting these hours as a contribution to the Master Gardener program or the Master Naturalist programs. However, there are 4 categories here that frequently have TCAs working outside of their Master Gardener County or are considered manual labor; thus, the hours are then only reported to the TCA program.

Those categories are Planting, First Detector, Research and Inventory. If a TCA is directly involved in physical activity (i.e. pruning or planting trees) rather than acting as an educator or supervisor, then the time is often not accepted by the Master Gardener program. Also, if a Master Gardener works outside of their county, the time is often not accepted by the Master Gardener program.

2009: The Value to the State of Minnesota.

The group Independent Sector annually calculates an hourly rate for volunteer contributions.

As previously reported there were 3,459.7 hours volunteered by TCAs in 2009. The hourly rate calculated by Independent Sector is \$20.85 yielding a value to Minnesota in 2009 of \$74,829.61.

Since the inception of the program TCAs have given 60,905 hours to the State with an estimated value of \$1,041,195 based on Independent Sector's annual hourly rate (see table).

TCA Contribution – 1993 to Present			(as of 7/28/10)
Year	Hours contributed	Hourly Rate * \$ per hour	Value to Minnesota in \$
1993	1110	12.35	13,708.50
1994	861.5	12.68	10,923.82
1995	847.5	13.05	11,059.88
1996	2368.5	13.47	31,903.70
1997	2539.35	13.99	35,525.51
1998	3559.25	14.56	51,822.68
1999	3858.2	15.09	58,220.24
2000	3235.5	15.68	50,732.64
2001	4549.5	16.27	74,020.37
2002	4089.2	16.74	68,453.21
2003	5185.15	17.19	89,132.73
2004	5753.8	17.55	100,979.19
2005	4923.45	18.04	88,819.04
2006	5453.35	18.77	102,359.38
2007	4823.55	19.51	94,107.46
2008	3639.85	20.25	73,706.96
2009	3588.95	20.85	74,829.61
2010 (July, 28)	568.2	20.85	11,506.05
Totals	60,905.8		1,041,195.87

* Hourly rates as reported by: www.independentsector.org .

DirT – The TCA Direction Team

DirT had success planning the 2008 summer picnic and a 2009 TCA summer benefit.

The 2008 summer picnic's celebration was centered on the achievement of attaining 50,000 volunteer hours TCAs have been volunteering since 1993. We rented a picnic shelter at a park in Dakota County. Approximately 30 people attended the picnic, bringing a dish to pass and conversation to share. Part of the celebration included a photo collage of TCAs planting trees and sharing knowledge through the TCA program.

DirT worked to advertise and organize the 50,000 hour summer party along with the summer benefit that took place on July 30th, 2009. A TCA, who is also a music director, offered the sales of his production, "They wrote the songs" to the TCA program. After the bill was settled with The Woman's Club of Minneapolis, the TCA program received a check for \$300. At this point, it has not been decided how that money will be spent.

Other than that, DirT has been resourceful in offering update training ideas along with providing input on what is needed for the TCA program.

2010 and Beyond...

The annual late winter Saint Paul TCA core course was completed in Saint Paul. In addition a core course was held in Rochester last autumn bringing the total number of Tree Care Advisors around Minnesota to 307.

In total 40 Minnesota Tree Care Advisors attended training sessions in preparation of presenting information on Emerald Ash Borer. In cooperation with Jeff Hahn, University of Minnesota Extension entomologist, a PowerPoint was created giving TCAs the means to present to community board meetings and other community education venues. The TCA program has lined up extra EAB kits for hands-on demonstrations and printed materials for distribution.

To date 41 presentations have been given with an estimated 700 contacts. These talks have ranged geographically from Duluth, Worthington, Mankato, and Rochester out to the Saint Cloud and Buffalo communities. Add in the EAB presentations delivered to the Rapid Response communities and the geographic spread is even farther.

To further expand this effort future topics will include Best Planting Practices, Tree and Shrub Selection and Pruning Young Trees for Long Lives.

TCAs continue to handle the traditional activities as outlined on pages 3 and 4 above. These services provide Minnesota residents with not only valuable information but also direction to 'next-step' resources to resolve their tree and shrub related questions.