

Overview

The City of Vernon is dedicated to improving our urban forest through the **Climate Action Plan**. Planting trees works towards this goal while offering potential energy cost savings by providing shade, reducing sound and dust pollution, and decreasing the impacts of flood events - all while enhancing the value of your property. See below for more information on the program.

What is the Tree Voucher Program?

The program allows Vernon residents to redeem a \$75 voucher towards the purchase of a tree at **Nicholas Alexander Home & Garden**, **Swan Lake Market & Garden**, or **The Flower Spot**. Vouchers are limited to one per residential property per year and must be picked up at the Community Services Building (3001 - 32 Ave) while supplies last.

To ensure trees establish well and are planted during the best conditions, it is recommended to avoid planting during the months of July and August as newly planted trees are more susceptible to stress from transplant shock. Note that this year's vouchers will expire after October 1, 2025.

What kind of trees can I plant?

Low water use trees are already adapted to the sunny and dry climate seen in the Okanagan. This makes them easier to care for and reduces household water consumption. Examples include Ponderosa Pine, Douglas Fir, and Spruce which are coniferous tree species that stay green all year.

What are shade trees?

Shade trees have a larger crown of leaves which lowers surrounding air and soil temperatures. This also reduces soil moisture loss. Examples include Oak, Linden, and Hawthorne which are all deciduous tree species that provide shade in the summer and allow sun in the winter as they lose their leaves seasonally.

Tip: Shade trees can help cool buildings when planted on the south side of your property.

Average Water Use

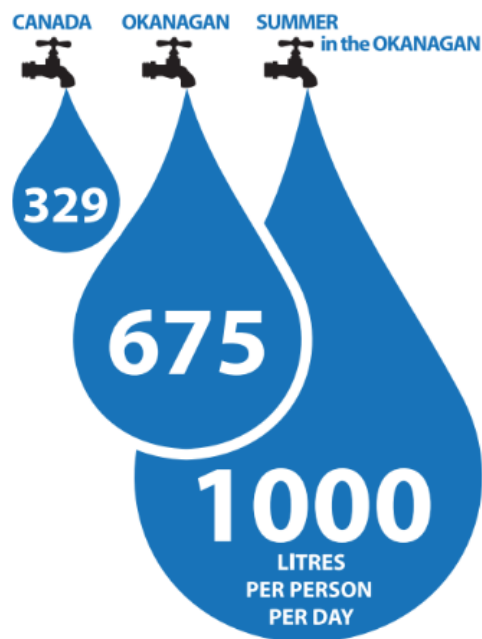


Image source: RDNO *WaterWise Gardening & Irrigation Handbook*.

What tree is best for my property?

As soil types and microclimates vary across Vernon, property owners should consider the following when picking the best tree for their property:

1. How much space is available?

Consider if the mature size of the tree would be impacted by structures, overhead lines, or other plants. Note that **FireSmart** guidelines generally recommend no planting within 1.5 meters of your home and a minimum spacing of 3 meters between trees for optimal fire separation. Coniferous trees, with cones and needles, are highly flammable and should not be within 10 meters of your home.

2. What are the soil conditions?

Clay soil is best suited for trees that like moisture while sandy soil is best suited for trees requiring a drier environment as it drains quickly.

3. How much annual maintenance is needed?

Some trees require more care and maintenance than others. Consider if you are prepared to regularly prune your tree or clean up fallen leaves as needed.

4. What existing vegetation is on the property?

Looking at your existing vegetation can help give an idea of what plant species are best suited to your property. When in doubt, we recommend connecting with a local garden center to identify the best species for your property conditions and interests.

5. What kind of tree do you like?

Consider what's important to you and make a list. You may want a shade tree that can assist in reducing energy consumption, a native tree that produces berries for birds, or a low water use tree that has vibrant fall colors. Make sure to pick a tree that fits your climate and environment.

Where can I learn more?



For more information about the **Tree Voucher Program** and eligibility criteria, contact the Community Services Building at 250-550-3634 or csbreception@vernon.ca. You can also scan the QR code on the left to access the program webpage from your phone.

For additional tree planting guidance, please refer to the Regional District of North Okanagan's **Waterwise Gardening & Irrigation Handbook**, the **Okanagan Xeriscape Plant Database**, or reach out to your local garden centre.

