

## Writer's Guidelines for *City Trees*

The online magazine, *City Trees* (CT), welcomes submissions from members and potential members of the Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA).

Please familiarize yourself with the magazine first; the editor can send you a link to sample issues if you are not yet a member. Then, send a short (one-paragraph) proposal to CT Editor Michelle Sutton at [citytreeseditor@gmail.com](mailto:citytreeseditor@gmail.com) for SMA's Editorial Review Committee (ERC) to consider.

When you query us, let us know what photos you can provide. If someone else took them, we'll need written (email) permission from the photographer(s).

At this time, CT doesn't have funds to pay writers or photographers.

Formatting basics:

- One space between sentences
- When referring to a kind of tree or shrub, the format is: common name (*scientific name in parentheses*)
- Times New Roman, 12 point
- Left justify paragraphs
- Single space, with double space between paragraphs

**SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOOD WRITING:**

### ***If you give statistics, cite their source***

Statistics have to be backed up by a reputable source. If you're speaking from experience or citing anecdotal evidence, that's fine, but be sure to take ownership of your opinions—"My experience has been" or "My observation is that"—rather than putting forth anecdotal evidence in a disembodied way.

### ***Active voice vs. passive voice***

Not every sentence need be in the active voice (witness this sentence), but the story should be predominantly told in the active voice. It's stronger writing, and it goes along with taking ownership of opinions.

### ***Avoid summarizing the work, talks, and research of others***

We prefer pieces about your own experiences, but if you must cite someone else's work, talks, or research, ask them to participate in the story. You can interview them, and we'll make sure they review the story before it goes to press.

### ***Be specific***

If you say, "Being a city forester in Georgetown is difficult," give specific examples of why it's difficult in Georgetown as opposed to other cities. If you say, "My exchange host was gracious," give us a specific example of something the host did to make your exchange more meaningful.

***Don't preach to the choir***

Our readership is knowledgeable and savvy, so you can skip opening paragraphs about the benefits of the urban forest, or the need for species diversity, or the fact that Emerald Ash Borer is a really big problem. Use one or two introductory sentences to set up a story, but then get right into the specifics of your experiences and observations.

***Expect your work to be edited***

... for clarity, succinctness, grammar, and punctuation. Expect that your manuscript will be batted back and forth a few times before it's ready for publication. You will get to review the final version before it goes to print.

***Advertorials need to be labeled***

Existing advertisers receive advertorial (promoting products or services) space in the magazine, labeled "advertisement." Otherwise, we don't run editorial content that is advertorial in nature.

**Please contact Michelle Sutton with any further questions at [citytreeseditor@gmail.com](mailto:citytreeseditor@gmail.com). Thank you for your interest in writing for *City Trees*!**