



Winner: **Our City Forest**

Award Category: **Education**

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Why Our City Forest was chosen for this Award

Our City Forest is a nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating a greener, healthier urban environment and a renewed sense of community by involving Silicon Valley residents in the understanding, planting and care of the urban forest.

Our City Forest's two educational programs, Planet Tree (geared toward students and Cub Scouts) and Green and Healthy (geared toward adults), address the need for water conservation. Planet Tree educates children about the importance of native trees and their drought-tolerant nature, and teaches them how they can save water in their homes and at school. The children also are provided with educational handouts to help them track their weekly water usage and learn how they can reduce their water use. Additionally, the Cub Scouts learn to identify six native species, and then view saplings of each species at Our City Forest's Tree Bank. There they learn about the drip-irrigation system and reclaimed water the Tree Bank uses for increased water conservation.

Each spring, Our City Forest holds three Green Fairs in San Jose. The Green Fair events educate the general public of Santa Clara County through pruning workshops, tree tours, native tree giveaways, and activities for children.

Green and Healthy's free community workshops provide high school-aged and adult participants with information and resources regarding water conservation, groundwater treatment and ways to make homes more "low flow." It helps residents make changes to their everyday water usage by providing information on local rebates for high-efficiency toilets and washing machines through PG&E, as well as free low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators and water audits available through local water agencies.

Since 2007, Planet Tree has reached over 3,000 schoolchildren and 500 Boy Scouts in Santa Clara County and surrounding communities, many at low-income schools. Green and Healthy has reached over 300 high school and adult participants.