The Faces of Urban Forestry

Paul Gallagher
Retired firefighter

Cincinnati, Ohio

Trees Shade Overheated Neighborhoods

Retired firefighter Paul Gallagher lives in a particularly hilly and dense part of Cincinnati, an area prone to unbearable heat on many summer days.

The shade and buffering offered by trees is already making a difference.

"I used to be able to look out my window and see the heat rising off the pavement," Paul says. "Once the trees went in, it felt ten degrees cooler when I walk down the block."

Each fall, the City of Cincinnati works with the local utility provider to sponsor the Cincinnati ReLeaf program. This partnership provides street trees to residents for planting in the street right-of-way or within 30 feet. Citizen groups have taken advantage of the program to plant virtually every available planting site in Paul's neighborhood, as well as on vacant lots, front yards, school grounds and park lands.

Were it not for Cincinnati's aggressive tree planting program, Paul's neighborhood – along with others throughout the city – would not have experienced cooler summer temperatures and added measures and peace and comfort.

"People are very proud of their neighborhoods in Cincinnati and trees make a difference," Paul says.

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>
> – Paul Gallagher

Once a parched corner (above), new trees soften the landscape and provide cooling shade (left).