



For Immediate Release

Contact: Lisa Taylor
City of Kentwood, 616.401.5137

City of Kentwood Seeks Volunteers to Help Save Trees by Combating Vines *Community Members Invited to Attend One of Five Training Sessions with the Kent Conservation District*

Kentwood, Michigan, Sept. 24, 2020 – The City of Kentwood is seeking volunteers interested in protecting and improving the tree canopy in the community by volunteering to help tackle vines harming trees in Kentwood.

The City has partnered with the Kent Conservation District Invasive Species Strike Team to train community members on how to identify and control aggressive and harmful weeds, such as oriental bittersweet, wild grape and poison ivy.

Vines can cause problems when they grow up into the canopy and cover a tree's foliage, starving it for sunlight. They can also cling to and strangle trees, inhibiting their ability to transport nutrients down to the roots, and also trapping moisture which can increase the risk of tree diseases.

“The City is pleased to join forces with the Kent Conservation District to educate residents on how to save our trees from the invasive vines that are harming them throughout the community,” said Kentwood Mayor Stephen Kepley. “All residents are invited to participate in one of the education sessions for the training necessary to stop the on-going damage to our trees.”

All those interested can join one of the mandatory training sessions:

- Monday, Sept. 28, 6-7 p.m. at Northeast Park (1900 Middleground Dr. SE)
- Tuesday, Sept. 29, 6-7 p.m. at East Paris Nature Park (5995 East Paris Ave. SE)
- Wednesday, Sept. 30, 4-5 p.m. at Stanaback Park (3717 Whitebud Dr. SE)
- Thursday, Oct. 1, 6-7 p.m. at Stauffer Station Park (2360 52nd St. SE)
- Saturday, Oct. 3, 10-11 a.m. at Covenant Park (3402 36th St. SE)

Following training, volunteers will have the opportunity to take part in an organized event to tackle vines in Northeast Park from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Oct. 10. The Kent Conservation District will guide volunteers and provide any necessary equipment. For this event, volunteers are recommended to wear clothing appropriate for physical outdoor work and weather conditions, such as long sleeves, pants and closed-toed shoes.

Trained residents also have the option to do self-directed work as long as they communicate with the Department of Public Works on where and when the work was completed, so staff can follow up if necessary. The City hopes to host more trainings and events in other parks in the future.

For more details, community members may visit kentwood.us/vinevolunteers.

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