

# Urban First Cover Letter



**United States  
Department of Agriculture**

**Forest  
Service**

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Dear Property Owner:

We invite you to participate in the National Property Owner Tree Survey conducted by the U.S. Forest Service. Your participation will help policy makers, land managers, and public and private service providers better understand and address the needs and concerns of America's urban property owners.

Whether your property has many trees, a yard shaded by a neighbor's tree, or something in between, we are interested in hearing from you. You were identified as a residential property owner from public ownership records. We are contacting only a few owners in each state. Because of the limited number of owners contacted, your answers are especially important. This survey is conducted once every 5 years to understand new topics and changes over time. If you responded during the last cycle, we ask that you respond again.

This is an official U.S. Forest Service survey, but your participation is voluntary. Your answers will be confidential and will be combined with others. The results will only be used to determine patterns and trends. Completing the questionnaire takes, on average, 25 minutes.

If you do not currently own residential property, please return the questionnaire using the postage-paid return envelope and write on the cover "No Residential Property Owned." If you would like to receive a copy of the results from this survey, write your name and address on the back of the return envelope.

We greatly appreciate your valuable assistance. If you have any questions please call us toll-free at 1-855-233-3372, visit our website at [www.fia.fs.usda.gov/nwos/](http://www.fia.fs.usda.gov/nwos/), or write us at USDA Forest Service, National Property Owner Tree Survey, 160 Holdsworth Way, Amherst MA 01003.

Brett J. Butler, Survey Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brett J. Butler".

# Urban National Landowner Survey

OMB # 0596-0078

Expiration date: to be updated

## Paperwork Reduction Act Notice

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0596-0078. Without this approval, we could not conduct this survey. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 25 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are voluntary. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the U.S.D.A. Forest Service email address [SM.FS.InfoCollect@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.InfoCollect@usda.gov) and include the OMB Control Number in the subject line.

### Instructions

- ✓ Please provide answers for the property you or your company or organization own listed on the outside of the envelope.
- ✓ The owner who makes most of the decisions about this property should answer this survey.
- ✓ If this survey is received by a company or other organization, please have a person knowledgeable about the organization's property and landscape management answer this questionnaire.
- ✓ Please only answer for the property specified on the envelope.
- ✓ If you or your company do not own the property listed, please return this questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope provided and write on the cover "Not My Property"

### Ownership and Land Information

1. Is your property residential?

- Yes  
 No

*If this is a residential property, go to question 2.*

*If this property is industrial, commercial, a vacant lot, municipally or publicly owned, or other non-residential uses, no additional responses are needed. Please return this survey in the postage paid envelope provided.*

## General Questions About Your Property

2. What type of residential structure is on your property?

- Single family home, detached  
 Duplex/townhouse/row home  
 Apartment building  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which category best describes who owns your property?

Select only one.

- Individual  
 Joint, with husband or wife  
 Joint, such as with other family members or friends  
 Family partnership or family LLC or LLP  
 Family trust or estate  
 Corporation or business (for-profit)  
 Corporation or business (non-profit)  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you or your company rent your property to others?

- Yes  
 No

5. How many total properties do you or your company own, including this one?

\_\_\_\_\_properties

6. Do you reside on your property?

- Yes  
 No

7. In what year did you or your company acquire your property?

\_\_\_\_\_year

**Property Features**

8. How many, if any, trees are on your property?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- More than 10
- I don't know

9. Which, if any, natural features does your property have?

*Select yes, no or don't know for each item*

Yes	No/Don't know	
£	£	Backyard
£	£	Front yard
£	£	Side yard(s)
£	£	Trees and/or shrubs that were planted
£	£	Trees and/or shrubs that grew naturally
£	£	Vegetable/fruit garden
£	£	Flower garden
£	£	Stream, pond or other natural water feature on or abutting property

10. Which, if any, built features, does your property have?

*Select yes or no for each item*

Yes	No	
£	£	Recreational feature, such as tennis or basketball court
£	£	Water feature, such as a pool or pond
£	£	Driveway
£	£	Patio, porch, or deck
£	£	Shed or other storage building

**Activities**

11. Which, if any, of the following have occurred on your property in the **past 5 years**?

*Select yes, no/don't know for each item*

Yes	No/Don't know	
£	£	Eliminated or removed invasive plants
£	£	Installed a rain barrel or rain garden
£	£	Installed a new lawn
£	£	Planted shrubs, flowers, or ornamental grasses
£	£	Planted one or more trees
£	£	Pruned trees or did other tree care

- £     £     Removed one or more trees
- £     £     Worked with neighbors to minimize tree risks from their property
- £     £     Contracted the city/town about trees near the street
- £     £     Contacted the utility companies about trees near the wires
- £     £     Treated trees for pests/diseases

12. Which of the following, if any, have occurred on your property in the **past year**?

*Select yes, no/don't know for each item*

- | Yes | No/Don't know |                                            |
|-----|---------------|--------------------------------------------|
| £   | £             | Composting yard and/or food waste          |
| £   | £             | Gardening                                  |
| £   | £             | Mowing the lawn                            |
| £   | £             | Applied fertilizers to lawn                |
| £   | £             | Applied fertilizers to trees               |
| £   | £             | Used chemicals to control weeds or insects |
| £   | £             | Watering lawn, trees, or other plants      |

13. Which, if any, of the following social/recreational activities have occurred on your property in the **past year**?

*Select yes, no/don't know for each item*

- | Yes | No/Don't know |                                                                     |
|-----|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| £   | £             | Recreational activities, such as games, sports, or children playing |
| £   | £             | Social activities, such as cookouts or parties                      |
| £   | £             | Birding                                                             |
| £   | £             | Other (please specify): _____                                       |

**Programs and Organizations**

14. In some communities, there are groups of residents who volunteer their time to help maintain public green spaces (even tho this might not be the main reason for having the group). The volunteer work may involve activities like tree planting, litter removal, habitat restoration, trail construction, stream restoration, or working in a community garden.

- a. How familiar are you with groups like these in your property's city/town?
- Extremely familiar
  - Moderately familiar
  - Somewhat familiar
  - Slightly familiar
  - Not at all familiar
- b. Have you or your company participated in a group like this in the **past 5 years**?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

15. In some areas, there are programs that help property owners cover the expense of planting new trees or caring for existing trees on their property.

- a. How familiar are you with programs like these?

- Extremely familiar
  - Moderately familiar
  - Somewhat familiar
  - Slightly familiar
  - Not at all familiar
- b. In the past 5 years, have you or your company used a program like this to help plant new trees or maintain existing trees on your property?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

**Sources of Information and Assistance**

16. How familiar are you or your company with the services provided by the following professionals?

Select one box for each item.

	Extremely familiar	Moderately familiar	Somewhat familiar	Slightly familiar	Not at all familiar
Government tree care professionals					
Private tree care professionals					
Landscape designers or contractors					
Extension agents/educators					
Non-profit/NGOs					
Master gardeners					

17. Who, if anyone, do you trust for providing you or your company with information about caring for or planting trees on your property?

Select yes or no for each item

- |     |    |                                          |
|-----|----|------------------------------------------|
| Yes | No |                                          |
| £   | £  | Tenant(s)                                |
| £   | £  | Neighbor(s)                              |
| £   | £  | Family member(s) or friend(s)            |
| £   | £  | Extension agent or educator              |
| £   | £  | Other state employee                     |
| £   | £  | Local government employee                |
| £   | £  | A non-profit organization                |
| £   | £  | Employee at lawn and garden center       |
| £   | £  | Landscaping or tree care professional(s) |
| £   | £  | Other (please specify): _____            |
| £   | £  | No one                                   |

18. a. In the past 5 years, have you or your company talked with anyone or received

information/advice about how to maintain your property's landscape?

Yes

No

*If yes, please answer b, c, and d*

*If no, skip to question 19*

b. What was it about?

*Select yes or no for each item*

Yes	No	
£	£	Trees
£	£	Vegetable/fruit gardening
£	£	Lawn care
£	£	Storm water/runoff management
£	£	Ornamental flowers and shrubs
£	£	Weed, pest, or disease control
£	£	Other (please specify): _____

c. How did it happen? *Select yes or no for each item*

Yes	No	
£	£	Talked to someone in person
£	£	Talked to someone on the phone
£	£	Received a brochure or other written material
£	£	Attended a workshop in person
£	£	Attended a workshop - virtually
£	£	Went to a library
£	£	Read product labels
£	£	Went to a lawn and garden center
£	£	From the Internet or social media
£	£	Other (please specify): _____

d. Who was involved? *Select yes or no for each item*

Yes	No	
£	£	Tenant(s)
£	£	A neighbor
£	£	A family member or friend
£	£	Extension agent or educator
£	£	Other state government employee
£	£	Local government employee
£	£	A non-profit organization
£	£	Employee at a lawn and garden center
£	£	Landscaping or tree care professional(s)
£	£	No one. I found the information myself
£	£	Other (please specify): _____

19. How would you or your company prefer to get information or advice about the care of the trees/shrubs/grass on your property? *Select yes or no for each item*

- |     |    |                                                            |
|-----|----|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yes | No |                                                            |
| £   | £  | Talk to someone in person                                  |
| £   | £  | Talk to someone on the phone                               |
| £   | £  | Written materials, such as brochures or other publications |
| £   | £  | Read product labels                                        |
| £   | £  | From the Internet or social media                          |
| £   | £  | From a lawn and garden center                              |
| £   | £  | Attend a workshop – in person                              |
| £   | £  | Attend a workshop – virtual                                |
| £   | £  | Go to a library                                            |
| £   | £  | Other (please specify): _____                              |
| £   | £  | I don't want/need information or advice                    |

**Concerns**

20. How concerned are you or your company about each of the following on your property?  
Select one box for each item.

	Great concern	Concern	Moderate concern	Of little concern	No concern	Not Applicable
Tree roots interfering with building foundations, pipes, or septic systems						
Live trees or branches breaking and causing damage or injury						
Dead trees or branches breaking and causing damage or injury						
Trees or branches breaking and causing a power outage						
Trees blocking solar panels installed on the property						
Damage from storms						
Climate change						
Trees blocking scenic views						
Trees attracting pests (e.g. animals, insects)						
Trees creating a fire hazard						
Trees irritating allergies						
Trees requiring a lot of						



water						
The expense of tree care						

**Trees**

20. Who performs the tree work on your property, if any tree work is being done?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Me
£	£	My husband or wife
£	£	My children
£	£	My parents
£	£	Tenant(s)
£	£	Another family member
£	£	A neighbor
£	£	Landscaping professional(s)
£	£	Tree care professional(s)
£	£	Home Owner's Association or Co-op
£	£	Other (please specify): _____

21. Is the wood from your property used?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

22. How important, or not important, is it to you or your company that trees removed from **your property** are used as urban wood products at some point?

- Very important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Of little importance
- Not important
- Not applicable

23. Please indicate your or your company's level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the trees on your property. Select one box for each item.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
The trees on the property are healthy and attractive						
Trees interfere with the enjoyment of the property						
Trees create more work for me						
I/we have the knowledge to properly care for the trees and						

shrubs on the property						
Felled branches, leaves, and seeds from trees make the property look messy						
I/we have the physical ability to property plant and care for the trees on the property						
Trees provide privacy						
Trees provide energy savings for the home						
Trees improve the look of your property						
Trees provide shade and cooling						
Trees reduce the noise from the road						
I/we know who to ask for help on how to properly plant and care for trees on the property						
Trees reduce my stress level						
Trees leave a legacy for future generations						

24. Please indicate your or your company's level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your property. *Select one box for each item.*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Good landscaping increases property value					
Animals are a problem for the trees, lawn, and/or garden					
I/we enjoy seeing wildlife					
I/we care about what neighbors think of the appearance of the yard					

25. Please indicate your or your company's level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about the trees in your community. *Select one box for each item.*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The community should invest more in tree plantings and tree care					
Having trees in a neighborhood makes it a better place to live					
Having diverse trees in the neighborhood is important					
The health and condition of trees in the neighborhood should be considered when new buildings are constructed or street					

improvements are made					
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## General Questions About You

26. What is your age?

\_\_\_\_\_ Years

27. What is your gender?

Male

Female

28. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

Less than 12th grade

High school/GED

Some college

Associate degree

Bachelor's degree

Advanced degree

29. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

Yes

No

30. What is your race?

*Select one or more.*

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African-American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

31. . What is your household's annual income?

Less than \$25,000

\$25,000 - \$49,999

\$50,000 - \$99,999

\$100,000 - \$199,999

\$200,000 or more

\*\*In addition to the Urban questions above, Urban Science Module questions below can be added to the survey, but not to exceed 25 minutes of burden time.

## Urban National Landowner Survey Scimods

### Neighborhood and Community

For the following questions, “neighborhood” includes both the block or street you live on and several blocks or street in each direction.

1. Which, if any, of the following neighborhood or community activities do you regularly do?

*Select yes or no for each item*

Yes    No

- |   |   |                                                                            |
|---|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| £ | £ | Attend a neighborhood or community meeting                                 |
| £ | £ | Attend a social event in my neighborhood, such as a cookout or block party |
| £ | £ | Talk/visit with a neighbor                                                 |
| £ | £ | Maintain a plot in a community garden                                      |
| £ | £ | Go to a nearby park                                                        |
| £ | £ | Bike around my neighborhood                                                |
| £ | £ | Walk or jog in my neighborhood                                             |
| £ | £ | Birding                                                                    |
| £ | £ | Collect or forage wild plants or mushrooms                                 |

2. In what, if any, types of groups do you participate in your community?

*Select yes or no for each item*

Yes    No

- |   |   |                                                        |
|---|---|--------------------------------------------------------|
| £ | £ | Garden club                                            |
| £ | £ | Master gardener or master naturalist                   |
| £ | £ | Parent-teacher organization/Parent-teacher association |
| £ | £ | Environmental group                                    |
| £ | £ | Religious group                                        |
| £ | £ | Neighborhood association                               |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): _____                          |
| £ | £ | None of the above                                      |

3. Please rate the following characteristics of the neighborhood and community around your property.

*Check one box for each item.*

	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Cleanliness of streets and sidewalks in the neighborhood					
Number of parks and open spaces in the neighborhood					
Quality of parks and open spaces in the neighborhood					
Number of trees in the neighborhood					
Quality of the trees in the neighborhood					
Safety and security in the neighborhood					

4. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.  
*Check one box for each item.*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Local government services are adequate in the neighborhood						
People in the neighborhood are willing to help one another						
People in the neighborhood can be trusted						
There are many opportunities to meet neighbors						
There is an active neighborhood group or association						
Trespassing and/or vandalism are concerns for the property						
Vacant properties are a concern in the neighborhood						

## Urban Wood Use

1. "Urban wood" is wood that comes from a city or town's public or private trees that were removed due to death, disease, or other circumstances (NOT due to economic value).
  - a. Have you or your company ever purchased or acquired urban wood products (e.g. wood chips, firewood, flooring, small item) from the city/town where the property is located?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Don't know

*If yes, please answer b.*

*If no or don't know, skip to question xx.*

2. Which, if any, of the following urban wood products did you or your company purchase or acquire?  
*Select yes or no for each item*

Yes    No

£    £    Wood chips or mulch

£    £    Compost

£    £    Firewood

£    £    Whole logs

£    £    Lumber

£    £    Furniture

£    £    Flooring

£    £    Interior or exterior home products (e.g. doors, cabinets, trim)

£    £    Art or jewelry

£    £    Small items (e.g. kitchen goods)

£    £    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

3. How interested, or not interested, are you or your company in purchasing urban wood products made from trees removed from the city/town where the property is located?  
 Check one box for each item.

	Very interested	Interested	Moderately interested	Slightly interested	Not at all interested
Wood chips or mulch					
Compost					
Firewood					
Whole logs					
Lumber					
Furniture					
Flooring					
Interior or exterior home products (e.g., doors, cabinets, trim)					
Art or jewelry					
Small items					

(e.g. kitchen goods)					
Other (please specify)					

4. How important, or not important, is it to you or your company that trees removed in **your city/town where the property is located** are used as urban wood products?
- Very important
  - Important
  - Moderately important
  - Of little importance
  - Not important
5. How important, or not important, is it to you or your company that trees removed from **your property** are used as urban wood products?
- Very important
  - Important
  - Moderately important
  - Of little importance
  - Not important

## Urban – Wildfire

Wildfire is an unplanned fire that starts in forestland, woodland, rangeland, shrubland, or grassland. It can be started by lightning or by people, either accidentally or intentionally.

Prescribed fire is a burn set by professionals on forestland, woodland, rangeland, shrubland, or grassland under strict guidelines. Prescribed fire is used, among other reasons, to prevent build-ups of flammable woody materials that could cause more intense wildfires.

1. Please indicate which of the following you or your company have experienced in the past 5 years.

*Select yes or no for each item*

Yes	No	
£	£	Wildfire burned on the land
£	£	Wildfire burned on a neighboring land
£	£	I have witnessed a wildfire
£	£	I/we have had structures on the land damaged or lost because of wildfire
£	£	I have seen a property soon after a wildfire burned through it
£	£	Smoke from a wildfire has made me physically uncomfortable or affected my health, or the health of someone in my household
£	£	Smoke from a wildfire has inconvenienced me (such as diminished scenery or caused outdoor plans to be cancelled)

2. Please indicate your level of concern about each of the following events occurring in the next 5 years on your property. *Select one box for each item.*

	Great concern	Concern	Moderate concern	Of little concern	No concern	Not applicable
Wildfire occurring on the property						
Wildfire occurring on public lands near the property						
Wildfire occurring on private lands near the property						
Smoke from wildfires affecting people on lands near the property						
Wildfire damaging the home or other structures on the property						
Loss of beauty or scenery due to wildfire on the property						



3. Please indicate which, if any, of the following activities you or your company have done in the past 5 years for the primary purpose of reducing wildfire risk on the property.

*Select yes or no for each item*

- | Yes | No |                                                                                     |
|-----|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| £ £ |    | Removed dead or dying trees/plants within 30 feet of the home                       |
| £ £ |    | Limbed up trees                                                                     |
| £ £ |    | Planted fire-resistant trees                                                        |
| £ £ |    | Purchased wildfire insurance for the land                                           |
| £ £ |    | Removed woody debris from ground                                                    |
| £ £ |    | Used mechanized or hand equipment to control undergrowth                            |
| £ £ |    | Thinned trees                                                                       |
| £   | £  | Trimmed tree canopies to keep branches 10 feet away from structures and other trees |
| £   | £  | Removed leaf litter (dry leaves/pine needles) from yard, roof, and/or rain gutters  |
| £   | £  | Other (please specify):                                                             |
| £   | £  | I have performed no activities to reduce the risk of wildfire on the property       |

4. Wildfires can cross property lines. To address this, some residential land owners communicate or coordinate efforts with owners of nearby properties (within a mile of the property) to reduce wildfire risk in their area. This can involve working with fellow private property owners or public land managers. Which of the following have you or your company done in the past 5 years?

*Select yes or no for each item*

- | Yes | No |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| £   | £  | Talked to nearby private property owners (within a mile of the property) about how to reduce wildfire risk                                                                                                        |
| £   | £  | Talked Worked with nearby private property owners (with in a mile of the property) to reduce wildfire risk (such as pooled resources to purchase equipment, hire professionals, or had neighborhood work parties) |
| £   | £  | Talked Coordinated efforts with public land managers to reduce wildfire risk on the property (such as performed recommended activities)                                                                           |

## Urban - Trees and Health

1. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about trees. Select one box for each item.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Trees improve human health						
Privately owned trees in cities and towns provide public health benefits						

**Urban – Trees, maintenance, and storms**

1. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your property.

*Select one box for each item.*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Cared for trees are more storm resistant						
Trees require maintenance to make them more storm resistant						
People can influence trees' resistance to storms						
By caring for trees, people can reduce damage to trees						
Storm-damaged trees pose a threat to people and property						
Storms will likely destroy trees on the property in the next five years						

2. How important to you are each of the following potential benefits trees provide?

*Select one box for each item*

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Of little Importance	Not important	Not applicable
Stormwater control						
Flooding reduction						
Improve air quality						
Improve water quality						
Noise control						

3. Which of the following actions have you or your company taken to

reduce potential damage from storms around the property in the past 5 years?

*Select yes, no or don't know for each item*

Yes	No /Don't know	
£	£	Removed living trees
£	£	Removed dead or dying trees
£	£	Pruned living trees to prevent branches from falling on structures
£	£	Removed trees near electrical lines
£	£	Pruned tree branches that extend over roof
£	£	Other (please specify):

4. Which of the following actions do you or your company plan to take to reduce potential damage from storms to trees around the property in the next 5 years?

*Select yes, no or don't know for each item*

Yes	No/Don't know	
£	£	Remove living trees
£	£	Remove dead or dying trees
£	£	Prune living trees to prevent branches from falling on structures
£	£	Remove trees near electrical lines
£	£	Prune tree branches that extend over roof
£	£	Other (please specify):