



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

Raymond G. Arbet, Director
Department of Public Works & Development Services

Matthew Collins, Director
Division of Parks
19600 75th Street, Suite 122-1
Bristol, Wisconsin 53104
(262) 857-1850
Fax: (262) 857-1885

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Contacts: Matthew Collins, Kenosha County Parks
262-857-1850, Matthew.Collins@kenoshacounty.org
Lee Colony, Gateway Technical College
262-564-2512, colonyl@gtc.edu

Dead ash trees in Silver Lake Park provide real-world training opportunity for Gateway urban forestry students

SILVER LAKE – A unique partnership earlier this week turned a rural Kenosha County park into a real-world laboratory for students in Gateway Technical College’s Arboriculture/Urban Forestry Program.

Students were at Silver Lake Park on Tuesday, working on the proper notching, felling and cleanup of dead ash trees that needed to be removed from the park.

Two industry experts were on hand for the removal: Cary Shepherd, a national chainsaw safety and operation trainer for Husqvarna, and Dave Schneider, district operations manager for SavATree.

Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser said the partnership with Gateway is an excellent example of public entities working together for mutual benefit.

“This was a perfect scenario, where the county needed hazardous trees removed, and Gateway needed a place to show students how to safely perform this important work,” Kreuser said. “When we see opportunities where we can help our partners in government and education, and they can help us, it’s in everybody’s best interests to work together.”

Aaron Schauer, instructor and program director of Gateway’s Arboriculture/Urban Forestry program, led the students in Tuesday’s lesson.

“This collaboration offers a great opportunity for our students to be able to apply what they’ve learned in a real-world situation,” Schauer said. “We really can’t be cutting down the trees on our campus, so having the ability to remove dead trees from the park is a win-win. It helps the students gain valuable experience in their education and career, as well as give back to the community.”

The students removed six trees from the park on Tuesday. Schauer said he hopes to return his class to county parks in the future.

Matthew Collins, Kenosha County Parks director, praised the county's alliance with Gateway.

"It's great to see another generation of students learning how to properly manage our natural resources through Gateway's Urban Forestry associate degree program," Collins said. "Our Kenosha County Parks system is always looking for creative partnerships, and we're glad that we can collaborate with Gateway not only to help manage our tree population, but also to host hands-on instruction for their students."

About Kenosha County Parks: Established in 1927, the Kenosha County Parks system offers more than 1,500 acres of managed recreational land at eight parks dotted across the county, plus 14 miles of paved cycling trails.

About the Gateway Arboriculture/Urban Forestry Program:

Gateway's Arboriculture/Urban Forestry Technician associate degree provides the hands-on skills and natural resource education for graduates to enter the exciting career field of arborists, urban foresters and related occupations. Gateway is only one of two technical colleges in Wisconsin to offer training in this field.

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