



NYC RESTAURANT AND PARKS COMMISSIONER SHARE RECIPE FOR “COOL” NEW WAY TO KEEP NEW YORK CITY GREEN

Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe today joined restaurateur Danny Meyer and his team at the new Shake Shack on the Upper East Side (154 East 86th Street) to water the Honey Locust street tree outside the storefront, show how New York City restaurants are going green this summer, and encourage New Yorkers to water their local street trees to help keep their neighborhoods green. New York City's street trees need 15 to 20 gallons of water a week, particularly during the current heat wave and throughout the summer, so they can continue to lower temperatures, reduce air pollution, and beautify our city.



“As summertime heats up, what’s cookin’ in your neighborhood?” said Commissioner Benepe. “Restaurants such as the Shake Shack are celebrating summer in an environmentally friendly way by caring for their local street trees, and you can too. We encourage all New Yorkers – from local business owners to building supers to homeowners to neighborhood residents – to join the bucket brigade. New Yorkers can use a bucket, watering can, hose or leftover water from their coolers to water the street trees in front of their homes or storefronts on their blocks – not only during this heat wave – but throughout the summer.”

“Shake Shack began its life in Madison Square Park and we are proud of our ‘green’ roots – not to mention our green roof!” said Union Square Hospitality Group CEO Danny Meyer. “New York City’s parks and streetscapes greatly benefit from healthy trees, and our team is incredibly excited to support this important initiative. Shake Shack looks forward to serving many Million Trees Concretes to guests at our Upper East Side location.”

MillionTreesNYC is a cornerstone of Mayor Bloomberg’s PlaNYC, a blueprint to fight global warming and create a more livable city. MillionTreesNYC is a joint initiative of the City of New York and New York Restoration Project, through which one million new trees will be planted and cared for throughout the five boroughs by 2017. Since the initiative was launched in October 2007, over 375,000 trees have been planted. These young trees need extra “TLC” by caring citizens – and attentive watering during the summer – during the first two years of their life as they adapt to their urban environment.

At the event, Danny Meyer announced the new “Million Trees Concrete” – a delicious frozen treat featuring a blend of chocolate custard, local NY State honey and graham crackers – just the thing to beat the summer heat. A portion the proceeds from the Million Trees Concrete will support the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City and the MillionTreesNYC initiative.

The Parks Department suggests the following basic guidelines when watering street trees:

- Water each young tree 15-20 gallons once a week between May and October (that’s 3-4 large buckets).
- Using a hand cultivator, carefully loosen the top 2-3 inches of soil to alleviate compaction and help water and air reach the roots.
- Do not dig any deeper or use large tools. These will damage the tree roots.
- Water slowly so the water penetrates the soil and does not run off of the surface.
- Water at the soil level, not through the leaves of shrubs and groundcovers.
- If it rains one inch or more in a week’s time period, you do not need to water.

Additional suggestions include:

- Poke small holes at the bottom of a large trash can. Fill it with 15-20 gallons of water and leave the trash can in the tree pit overnight to allow for gradual watering.
- Ask building maintenance staff to water trees while they are hosing off sidewalks.
- Ask street vendors and merchants to dump water from their containers (coolers with melted ice or flower buckets) into nearby tree pits at the end of the day.
- Make sure water with detergent or bleach is dumped into the gutter, not the tree pit.

New Yorkers who would like to learn more about how to water and care for their local street trees can join the MillionTreesNYC Stewardship Corps, launched in May 2009 as a collaboration with Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Greenbelt Conservancy, GreenThumb, Partnerships for Parks, Queens Botanical Garden, New York Botanical Garden and Trees New York to build a community-based network of tree stewards across the city’s five boroughs. The Stewardship Corps engages everyday New Yorkers in urban tree stewardship through:

- Accessible, no-cost tree care workshops and toolkits;
- Coordination and expansion of existing environmental and tree stewardship programs across New York City;
- “Train-the-Trainer” workshops to provide trainings to organizations and empower Corps members to educate new tree stewards through their local networks; and
- Online space for tree stewards to network and share tree care resources.

<http://www.milliontreesnyc.org/html/newsroom/pr_shake_shack_tree_watering.shtml>