

Award of Excellence

2008 Arboricultural Project of the Year

“Residential Street Tree Pruning Program”

First Colony Community Association

Margaret Hall Spencer and Steve Spears

Our next Award of Excellence is the Arboricultural Project of the Year – Residential Street Tree Pruning Program by First Colony Community Association. Would Margaret Hall Spenser and Steve Spears please join us on stage?



First Colony Community Association (FCCA) is a 10,000 acre master planned community in Sugar Land, Texas, with approximately 600 acres of landscaped and irrigated common areas including parks, greenbelts, medians, and 72 neighborhood subdivisions.



When the City of Sugar Land implemented an ordinance requiring street trees to be pruned with a clearance of 12' over streets and 8' over sidewalks, Margaret Hall Spencer, FCCA Landscape Manager, and Robert Jaros, FCCA Residential Code Enforcement Manager, realized this would present a challenge for their nearly 35,000 residents since street trees are required in the association's deed restrictions.



Not only would it be difficult to get the homeowners to prune their trees, but also to prune them correctly. Robert asked if it was a service that FCCA could provide to its residents. FCCA Landscape Department staff, working with horticultural consultant,



Dr. Todd Watson, then developed specifications and sent out requests for proposals. When the bids came back and it was determined that the project was affordable to residents, the work really began.



The pruning schedule was developed and communication and publicity began. The City of Sugar Land was extremely pleased with the effort and utilized FCCA Landscape Department staff to develop a video for the City's website, write articles for the City's newsletter, and speak about the program at a City meeting. In addition to City-wide publications, FCCA ran a series of articles in its own newsletter, added the City's video to its website, and continues to publish monthly updates.



The program has been overwhelmingly successful and a valuable service to homeowners. Approximately 24,000 street trees belonging to homeowners are pruned under this program. The trees are pruned correctly and according to ANSI standards, which will benefit the long term health of the tree, provide a beautiful, consistent canopy over the streets, and improve property values in the community.

Please join me in congratulating Margaret and Steve and the rest of the First Colony Community Association team for all their innovative work to keep the trees in their neighborhoods safe and healthy!