

Louisville Adds 166 New Trees to Downtown, Replacing Some Lost to Wind, Drought

By [Erica Peterson](#)



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Credit Erica Peterson / WFPL

Workers from Action Landscape plant one of the new trees outside the Brown Hotel on Fourth Street.

Work has begun on replacing some of the dead trees and empty tree wells in Louisville's downtown area.

There are more than 300 dead trees or vacant tree wells in downtown Louisville. Some of the trees fell victim to ice storms, some to strong winds, and some to drought. With money from Metropolitan Sewer District, Metro Government, the Louisville Downtown Management District and a donation from Tree Commission co-chair Henry Heuser Jr., 166 new trees will be planted over the next few weeks.

MSD Regulatory Services Director Brian Bingham says trees are essential to helping his agency fulfill the terms of its consent decree with the federal government.

“And as part of our consent decree, we are mandated to reduce the amount of overflows that happens in heavy rain events.” Bingham said. “One of the most effective ways to do that is by planting trees. Each tree is capable of either taking hundreds or thousands of gallons of water out of the runoff to that system each year, depending on the size of those trees.”

Mayor Greg Fischer says the trees are a necessary component to improving the city's environment and livability.

We've heard about that improving air quality, urban heat island, lower cooling costs, reducing storm runoff and really creating a more attractive, safe, desirable neighborhood as well," he said. "So trees. If you're against trees, you got a problem. ""

Louisville Downtown Management District has committed to maintaining the new trees for seven years, which includes watering them, in hopes the new batch of trees will be able to survive any future droughts.