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# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



**CONTACT:** Amy Head  
(707) 724-3203

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### **CAL FIRE Highlights the Importance of Trees in California 2017 California Arbor Week Poster and Video Contest Announced**

Sacramento – Trees are an essential part of California’s climate and are vital to improving air quality and conserving water. To help educate Californians on the value that trees provide to building successful, healthy cities and neighborhoods, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) and California ReLeaf are announcing the annual statewide Arbor Week poster contest for students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Rules and details can be found online [here](#). In addition, CAL FIRE and California ReLeaf are also holding a video contest for students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Rules and details for the video contest can be found [here](#). For each contest, students are asked to create original artwork or video based on the theme **“Trees Are Superheroes!” (¡Los Árboles Son Superhéroes!)**. Also available now are lesson plans that align with Common Core Standards. Submissions are due to California ReLeaf by February 14, 2017. Winners will be featured at the State Fair, displayed on the California ReLeaf/CAL FIRE websites, and awarded cash prizes provided by CAL FIRE, the California Community Forests Foundation, and California ReLeaf.

CAL FIRE and California ReLeaf are partnering to encourage cities, nature groups, schools, and youth organizations to celebrate California Arbor Week by planting trees in their communities. California ReLeaf works statewide to promote alliances among community-based groups, individuals, industry, and government agencies working to protect the environment by planting and caring for trees and the state’s urban and community forests.

“Trees are truly earth’s superheroes,” said CAL FIRE Deputy Director Helge Eng. “They can combat the impacts of climate change and help provide cleaner air and water. . Those are some real superhero powers.”

The goals of Arbor Week include educating Californians about trees, encouraging tree planting, teaching elementary school children the environmental, social, and economic benefits of trees, and protecting the state’s valuable natural resources.

“Trees are amazing superheroes for our cities and towns and perform many extraordinary feats every day to protect our communities,” said Cindy Blain, Executive Director of California ReLeaf. “They cool the air, clean the air, clean and capture rainwater, reduce our blood pressure and increase our mental concentration. All this is just another way of saying that trees keep our communities safe and make us healthier and smarter. Arbor Week is the perfect time to honor and recognize the trees - the superheroes we see every day.”

Contest rules and the new educational materials can be downloaded at <http://arborweek.org/for-educators/>. The contest is sponsored by California ReLeaf, CAL FIRE, and the California Community Forests Foundation.

California Arbor Week runs March 7-14 every year to mark famed horticulturist Luther Burbank's birthday and to raise awareness of the benefits of trees in our communities. In 2011, legislation was passed to define California Arbor Week in statute. Visit [www.arborweek.org](http://www.arborweek.org) for more information.

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