

## HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR NEW TREE

After your new tree is installed, there are a few tree-care tips to remember, ensuring your tree's survival.

**Water is KEY!** Watering is the key to a tree's survival during the first year. The question we are always asked is how much and how often?

A new tree should be watered deeply once or twice a week when there is no rainfall. Slowly apply at least 1" of water to the planting site – the easiest way to do this is to turn the hose on to a trickle and leave it at the base of the planting site for around 15-30 minutes. Village staff will install a Gator Bag, a bag that holds water which is slowly released to irrigate the root ball. It would be very helpful if you were able to fill this Gator Bag on a weekly basis throughout the first growing season or next summer. In following years we would ask you to continue the irrigation process if dry conditions exist.

If an automatic irrigation is present, talk to the technician to be sure the tree is watered properly. The technician can change and/or redirect an irrigation head and re-program the irrigation time needed.

Be careful to not over-water. It is possible to kill a plant with kindness. Overwatering causes the roots to rot and ultimate death of the tree. If you are not sure whether water is needed, dig down at least 3-4" (past the mulch layer) and check for moisture in the soil. If the soil is not damp, it is time to water. There is no substitution for physically verifying the moisture content of the soil.

**Keep the Tree Safe:** Keep lawn mowers, string trimmers and general traffic away from the tree using a mulch mower zone (this is a mulch ring installed around the newly planted tree).

**Fertilization:** When your tree is installed, we make sure it will have all the nutrients it needs for the first growing season. **Applying "weed and feed" to your lawn might injure or kill your tree.** Some combination weed killers and lawn fertilizers will injure trees. Do not use anything that states it will kill broadleaved weeds (most deciduous trees are broadleaved). Pre-emergent herbicides are safe to use near trees.

**Mulching:** Maintain a ring of mulch around the tree (the wider the better). Mulch is very important. It keeps moisture in, temperatures steady and weeds down. Make sure it is not more than four inches deep or piled against the trunk. Weed and replace mulch in mulch mower zone as needed. Organic materials like wood chips and leaves are best. Wood chips will take longer to break down and, therefore, will not require replacement as often.

**TIP: Newspaper kills grass.** If there is grass in the area that needs to be mulched, put a 5-page layer of newspaper over the grass, and then add mulch on top (this will help keep the grass from growing up through the mulch).

**Mulch becomes soil.** There should never be more than 4 inches of mulch over the roots. Too much mulch or soil can prevent oxygen from reaching the roots.