



## New Albany Street Tree Program - Tree Care

### **Caring for Your Newly Installed Tree**

#### **Watering**

Proper watering during the first 2 years after planting is the most critical maintenance requirement for establishing newly planted trees. Keep the soil moist, but not water-logged. Water trees once a week barring rain, and more frequently during hot, windy weather. Check soil moisture by using a garden trowel and inserting it into the ground to a depth of 2", and then move the blade of the trowel back and forth to create a small narrow trench. Touch the soil; if the soil is moist to the touch, hold off on watering. When the soil is dry below the surface of the mulch, it is time to water. **In general, newly planted 2"-3" caliper trees require 10-15 gallons of water/week.** Continue until mid-fall, tapering off as lower temperatures require less frequent watering.

#### **Proper Mulching**

Mulch the base of the tree. Mulch is organic matter spread around the base of a tree to hold moisture, moderate soil temperature extremes, and reduce grass and weed competition. Common mulches include composted wood chips, shredded bark, leaf litter or pine straw. A 2-3 inch deep layer is ideal. More than 3 inches may cause a problem with oxygen and excessive moisture levels. Piling mulch right up against the trunk of a tree may cause decay of the living bark. It is important to keep mulch pulled back 1-2 inches away from the trunk of the tree to prevent moist bark conditions and the potential for decay.

#### **Fertilizing**

Fertilizing is generally not recommended until 1 year after planting. This is due to the need to focus energy on recovering/establishing new root growth. When trees are spaded, and transplanted, a large percentage of the root system is removed. However, there are fertilizers designed for transplant shock recovery such as root stimulator and mycorrhizae products.