

# Caring for your newly planted tree

## 1 **Water:** *Careful watering is crucial for your tree's survival, particularly during the first two years after planting.*

- Water your tree when the soil is dry beneath the mulch. Apply approximately 15-20 gallons of water once a week from March until the ground freezes, and as often as twice a week during hot and dry weather.
- Trickle water onto the soil surface using a hose, or allow water to seep from a bucket with small holes in the bottom. Watering slowly and deeply is best.

## 2 **Protect:** *Tree roots require water, air and nutrients for survival. Compacted soil and cemented pits prevent water, air and nutrients from reaching tree roots.*

- Avoid compacting the soil: don't pile trash, walk, or drive around the tree's roots.
- Never cement over the surface of your tree pit.

*Bark protects the trunk and maintains tree health.*

- Keep car doors, dogs, lawn mowers, string trimmers, and bicycles away from the trunk to avoid bark wounds.
- If you lay brick or stone around the tree, keep the material at least 6" from the trunk and check yearly to maintain this space (pavers placed too close to the trunk can strangle the trunk as it gets wider. Never raise the soil level around the tree, this will bury the root flare.

## 4 **Remove stakes and straps:** *Straps left on your tree for longer than a year may cut into the bark and strangle the tree.*

- Remove stakes and straps one year after planting.

## 5 **Cultivate:**

- Loosen the soil surface around your tree frequently to encourage water and air to enter the soil; try doing it seasonally.
- If the soil surface around your tree becomes compacted, loosen the first few inches of soil and break up any large clumps. Avoid damaging any large woody roots.

## 6 **Mulch:** *Mulch helps to conserve water, control weeds, moderate soil temperature, prevent lawnmower damage, prevent soil compaction, and nourish the tree.*

- Maintain a 3" layer of mulch around your tree, making sure to keep it 3" from the trunk. Recommended mulches include wood chips, composted leaves, and pine needles.
- Always remember to weed and cultivate the soil before mulching.

## 3 **Weed and Clean:** *Weeds, grass and trash can prevent water from reaching your tree's roots and cause a decline in your tree's health.*

- Weed and clean the area around your tree periodically to prevent toxic substance like dog urine, leaking garbage, motor oil, detergent or de-icing salt from entering the soil.

## 7 **Don't fertilize newly planted trees:**

- Fertilizers are not a plant food, and when applied to newly planted trees, it can add shock to the transplanted trees.

## 8 **Prune:**

- On newly planted trees, prune only dead, diseased, or damaged branches.

## 9 **Plant flowers:**

- Plant annuals such as begonias and marigolds around your tree in the existing soil.
- As flowers wilt in the summer heat, they will remind you to water your tree.
- Avoid perennials that will compete with your tree.