

Archive for May, 2012

Aftercare Of Newly Planted Trees

Friday, May 11th, 2012

OK. So you got your tree(s) planted during the planting month (April). What do you need to do now? Just sit back and watch it grow? No, no, no says the old forester. It's critical to keep a close eye on the newbies in order to assure they get off to a good start during their first growing season. Maybe you won't really have to do much to assure their success; it all depends on the circumstances for the rest of this spring and summer. A good growing season usually lessens the need to take major actions to assure success, but vigilance is still necessary in order to prevent something from sneaking up on you and your tree.

1. Keep the soil around the roots moist but not too wet with routine watering. Saturated soil smothers roots. Buy a cheap rain gauge, if you don't have one, so you can monitor rainfall at your place, instead of relying on the official weather station which may be located miles away. An average of one-half inch of moisture per week is usually sufficient for maintaining adequate soil moisture, although sandy soils may require a little more and clay soils a little less. Whatever you do, **DON'T OVERWATER!**

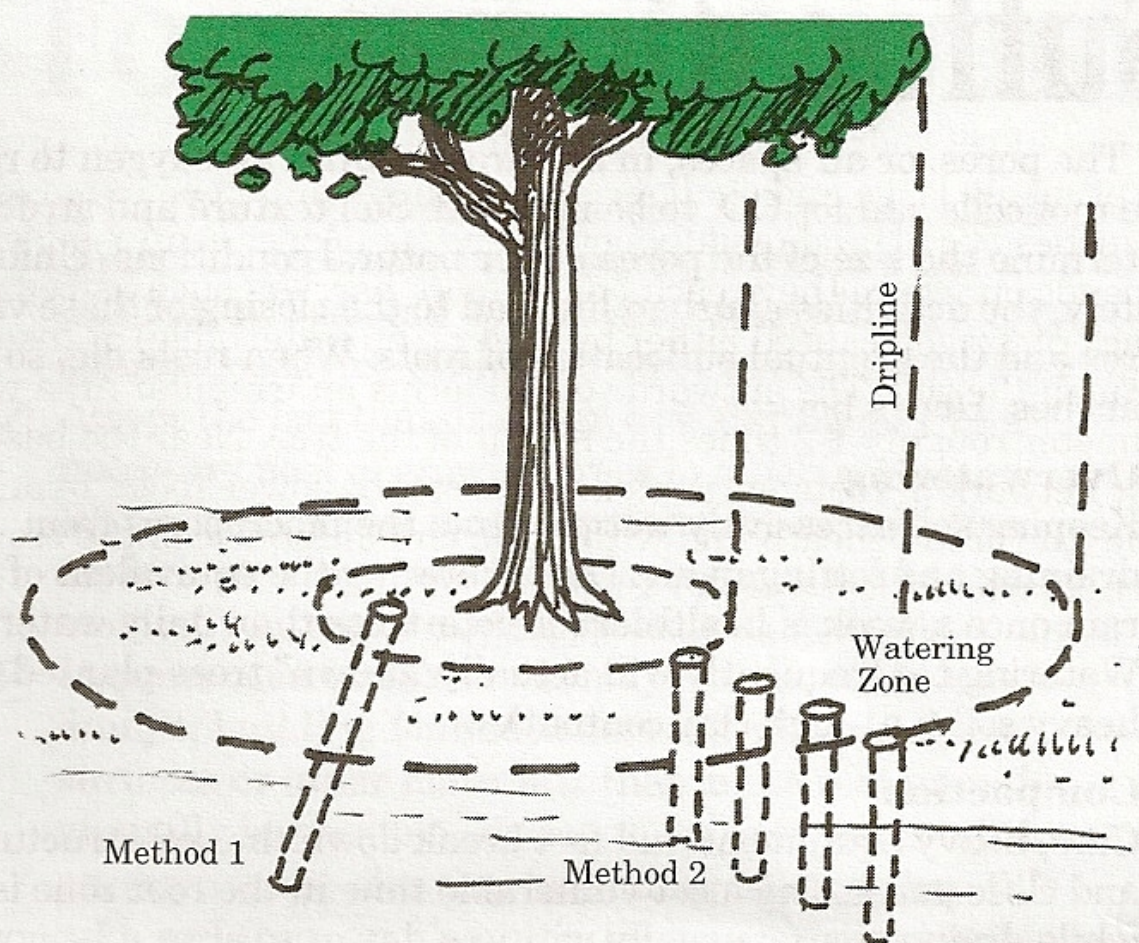
2. Spread mulch around the tree, if you haven't done so. A 3-4 feet wide pile, about three inches deep, helps preserve moisture and protects the tree from lawnmower damage. **MULCH IS A TREE'S BEST FRIEND!**

3. **REMOVE GUY WIRES OR SUPPORT STAKES FROM THE TREE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE;** and certainly by the end of the growing season. If the tree can stand on its own, it is usually anchored OK.

4. **REMOVE DEAD OR BROKEN BRANCHES IMMEDIATELY;** but don't start any pruning regimen until age three. The new guy/gal in the yard needs as much foliage as possible to start regenerating roots.

5. **CHECK REGULARLY FOR INSECT AND DISEASE ATTACKS.** If you think corrective action is needed ask your local certified arborist or nurseryman for the proper treatment.

6. **FERTILIZER IS SELDOM NEEDED;** and is not a remedy for poor growing conditions. Later on, established trees' growth may be increased by the judicious use of fertilizer, but this should only be done if recommended by a professional tree care adviser.





Deep Watering Methods

Method 1

Drill 3 or 4 holes approx. 18" deep and 1"-2" in diameter at an angle and outward from near the base of the tree. Inserting perforated plastic pipe and/or gravel will prolong the use of the holes before new ones need to be drilled.

Method 2

Drill 18"-deep holes, $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter, at 12" intervals around the drip line. Repeat at 12"-24" intervals within the watering zone. Fill holes with coarse sand and peat, fine gravel, or insert perforated pipes. Gravel surrounding a pipe, with less frequent holes, may also be used. Drill new holes when the old ones no longer accept water easily.

 TREE MAINTENANCE TIMETABLE 			
Years After Planting	Necessary	Desirable	Optional
0-3	Watering Mulching/ Weeding	Pest Control	Fertilizing
3-5	Mulching/ Weeding Pruning	Watering Pest Control	Fertilizing
5-10	Pruning	Mulching Pest Control	Fertilizing
10+ years		Pruning	Mulching Fertilizing Pest Control

The Value of Mulch



A young tree's best friend, mulch insulates soil, retains moisture, keeps out weeds, prevents soil compaction, reduces lawn mower damage, and adds an aesthetic touch to a yard or street. Remove any grass within a 3-foot area and pour organic mulch such as wood chips or bark pieces 2 to 4 inches deep within the circle. Keep the mulch from touching the trunk of the tree.