

Archive for January, 2013

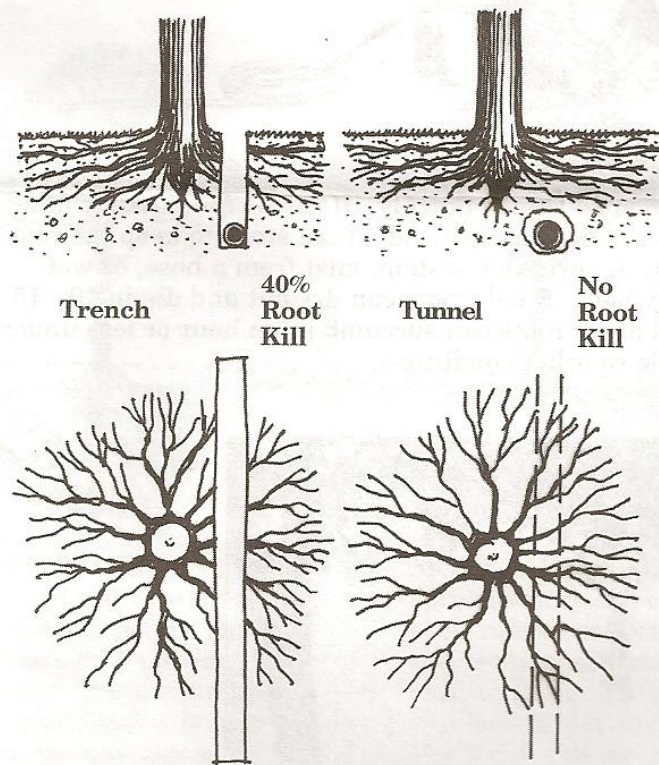
Tunnel To Protect Roots

Wednesday, January 9th, 2013

When pipes or cables must be placed – or replaced – within the root zone of a tree, there is no better way to do it than by tunneling. The beauty of tunneling is that modernized and effective equipment and techniques have made this practice much more available and affordable than has previously been the case. In addition, when done properly, it assures that vegetation, fences, and other landscape features remain completely undisturbed. Utility companies also benefit by saving time, reducing restoration expenses, and eliminating customer complaints. Tunneling was once more expensive than open trenching, but not now. In fact, tunneling has been shown to be 15-50 percent less in cost in many cases, and no more costly than trenching in almost all cases where trees and underground work must mix.

Thanks, once again, to the National Arbor Day Foundation, for the next series of illustrations on tunneling to protect root systems of trees.

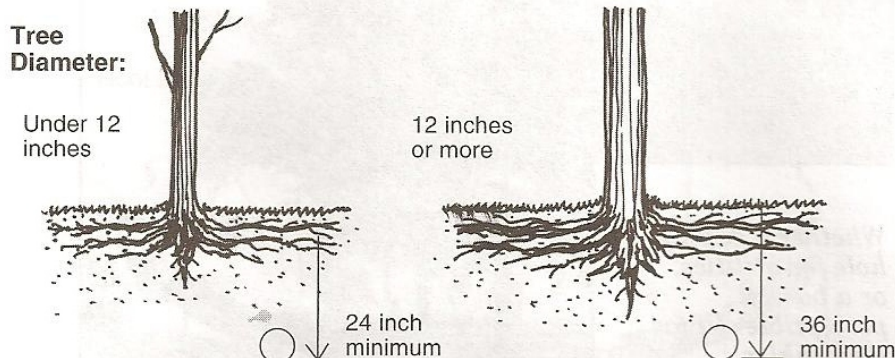
Why tunneling saves trees



Trenching near a tree can kill as much as 40 to 50 percent of the tree's roots. This will almost certainly lead to stress, poor health, lack of firmness against wind, or outright death. A tunnel in the same place will do virtually no damage to the tree.

How deep should it be?

Recommended:



Since most roots live in the top 18 inches of the soil, a tunnel 24 inches deep will usually do little damage. However, root patterns vary depending on species, tree size, and soil conditions. If it is apparent from trenching in the vicinity that roots are deeper than expected, boring should also be deeper.

Note: By placing the tunnel 1 or 2 feet on either side of the tree trunk, tap roots can be avoided.

Modern Tunneling To Protect Above-Ground Features

Thursday, January 24th, 2013

We've probably all seen tunneling projects in our communities featuring crews using a funny-looking machine. Phone companies laying new fiber optic cables have been the most active in using the funny looking machines lately, but this modern equipment and the techniques developed for using it have greatly reduced the damage to above ground features; and particularly to urban landscape trees. Depicted below is another wonderful drawing from the National Arbor Day Foundation that illustrates very well how this modern tunneling system works. It does it much better than I can describe, and I certainly couldn't draw it any better.

