



Proper Mulching = Healthy Safe Trees



Good mulching: away from trunk, less than 3" deep, and beyond the drip line

Mulch Only 3 Inches Deep

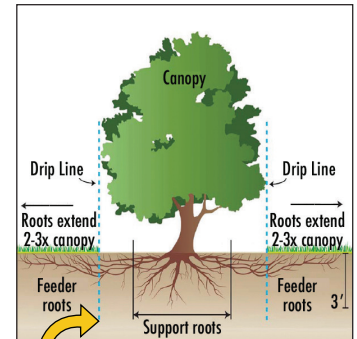
- Trees absorb oxygen through their roots.
- Proper mulching is important. Trees with no mulch grow very slowly, but too much mulch can smother the tree roots.
- Mulch less than 3 inches deep and beyond the dripline.



Bad mulching

Extend Mulch Beyond the Dripline

- The tiny feeder roots of the tree are out beyond the dripline.
- Feeder roots cannot grow if the soil is dry and hard.
- Wide mulch rings keep soil moist so tiny feeder roots can penetrate the soil.
- When the feeder roots grow, then the canopy grows. They balance each other out.



Extend mulch beyond drip line

Keep Mulch Off of Trunk

- If mulch is piled against the tree trunk, it holds the moisture against the bark and the trunk will start to rot.
- After a few years, the tree can rot all the way through and fall over in a storm.
- Keep mulch at least 4 inches away from the tree trunk.





Good root flare

Keep Flare Above Soil Line

- Trees buried too deep get less oxygen and are less healthy.
- When planting – place the root flare at or above the soil level.
- If it looks like a telephone pole – it is planted too deep, or mulched too much.



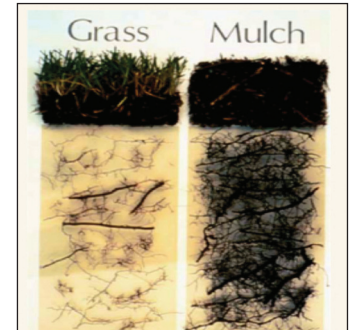
Too deep, over mulched

Protect the Area Under the Tree



Properly mulched

- Grass, under trees decreases root density and stresses the tree.
- Properly mulched trees grow twice as fast as trees grown in grass.
- Extra soil smothers your tree roots.
- Digging under trees can destroy the feeder roots.



Tree root density under grass vs. mulch

Water Carefully



Water meter

- Too much water can kill the tree by rotting the roots.
- Check with a moisture meter every time before watering.
- Moisture meters are available for under \$10 at big box stores.
- Better to water deeper and less frequently (water weekly - 15-20 gal).



Best mulch type

Other Things To Know

- Shredded hardwood mulch forms a thick waxy mat and repels water.
- Virginia Pine Fines mulch is the best mulch to use.
- Never use weed block fabric.
- Never throw soil on top of the roots if you edge the tree circle. Better still – don't edge the circle.

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