

Tips for City Trees, Spring & Summer 2013

Water your street tree

Water your tree once a week (every 7 – 10 days) on from spring thaw to winter freeze. Newly planted trees will require watering for the first 2-3 years until they are established. Water your tree thoroughly with approximately 20 gallons, or hand water by running a hose at low pressure for 20 minutes. During really hot weather, your tree will need 30 gallons of water each week, applied in 2 separate waterings: 15 gallons one day and 15 gallons a few days later. Newly planted trees are installed with a green watering bag. These watering bags make it easier to water the newly planted trees. Each bag holds 20 gallons of water. To fill the watering bag, you can find the “fill hole” under the tag located on the outside of the bag. The bag slowly releases the water of a 6-8 hour period.

If your tree pit does not have a watering bag, pour the water into the crack running between the curb and the sidewalk (from Trees New York Online). **Remember:** cultivating the soil allows water to seep to the roots, and adding mulch will conserve soil moisture.

Mulching

Remove trash and weeds in the tree well, and if possible, mulch. When mulching, spread a 3” layer of mulch equally over the pit and leave a clean 3” bear circle around the trunk.

Planting in tree pits

Planting flowers and groundcovers in your tree well breaks up the soil and allow the tree's roots to easily access water and oxygen. However, do not add more than ½ - 1" of soil to the tree well. Extra soil or mulch against the trunk can cause the bark to rot. Be careful when cultivating the soil; use a small hand shovel or fork. The roots of large trees take a longer time to recover from injury than the roots of a young tree.

Do not fertilize

Slow-release fertilizer is added to the soil for new street trees. In addition, never fertilize a tree during mid- to late- summer. Fertilizer is best added before bud break in the spring or in late fall.