

TREES AND SHRUBS: CARE AND MAINTENANCE

TruNorth uses standard horticultural practices for the proper transportation, preparation and installation of all plant material. All of the trees and shrubs installed on your site are transplanted from a nursery. Transplanted, regardless of how carefully performed, results in the destruction of a large portion of the absorbing root area. As the above ground part of a plant is a direct result of its roots, transplanting can set back a plant for a few seasons while it acclimates to its new environment.

Post Construction

You may notice the following signs of stress for 1 to 3 years after installation:

- Smaller than normal leaves.
- Intense leaf yellowing or leaf loss: if your plant suffers a large amount of leaf loss, it does not necessarily mean it is dead. Look closely for new buds or check for limber or flexible stems and twigs. Live tissue bends and is flexible, while dead tissue simply snaps and breaks.
- Premature fall color: indicates potential stress from transplanting, lack of adequate moisture or too much moisture.
- Plants may appear fine on one side and not on the other (this should NOT happen to evergreens).

Should you feel the conditions are not stress, contact TruNorth immediately



Inspect your plants regularly so a problem can be caught before it is too serious. The regular inspection of your landscape by a horticulturalist may help prevent or reduce the severity of future disease, insect and environmental problems.

The following are some of the items that should be inspected: new leaves or buds, leaf size, twig growth, and crown dieback (the gradual death of the upper part of the tree).

Mulching can reduce environmental stress by providing trees with a stable root environment that is cooler and contains more moisture than the surrounding soil. Mulch can prevent mechanical damage by keeping machines such as lawnmowers and string trimmers away from the tree's base. Mulch also reduces competition from surrounding weeds and turf. Depending upon appearance and the rate of decomposition, it may be necessary to replenish your mulch every two to three years.

The improper installation of mulch can cause serious damage to trees and shrubs. Below find illustrations of the right way versus the wrong way to install mulch.



Improper application of mulch



Proper application of mulch



Fertilization

Call TruNorth to asses and apply any and all fertilizers for your own safety as well as continued heath of your landscape.

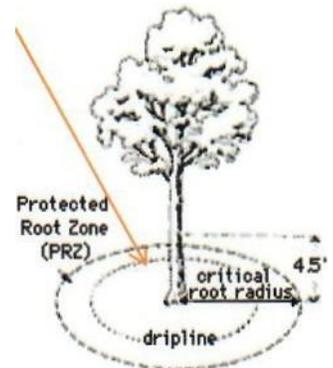
The fertilization of trees and shrubs can increase growth, reduce susceptibility to certain diseases and pests, and help reverse declining health. However, if fertilizers are not applied properly it may not benefit the plant at all, and may even adversely affect it. When considering supplemental fertilizer it is important to know what nutrients are needed, and when and how it should be applied. Soil conditions, especially pH and organic matter content vary greatly, making the proper selection and use of fertilizer a somewhat complex process.

Mature trees have expansive root systems that can extend from two to three times the size of the leaf canopy. A major portion of actively growing roots is located outside the tree's drip line.

DRIP LINE

Water coming off of the crown of a tree falls at a point which is called a dripline

Except for certain species, a tree's active root system extends only slightly further than its drip line.



Many lawn fertilizers contain weed and feed formulations that may be harmful to your trees.

The same herbicide that kills broadleaf weeds in your lawn is picked up by tree roots and can harm or kill your broadleaf trees and shrubs if applied incorrectly. Understanding the actual size and extent of a tree's root system is necessary to determine how much, what type, and where to best apply fertilizer or herbicide.



Pruning is the most common maintenance procedure next to watering. Pruning is often desirable or necessary in order to:

- Remove dead, diseased, or damaged branches
- Improve the tree's structure
- Enhance vigor
- Maintain safety

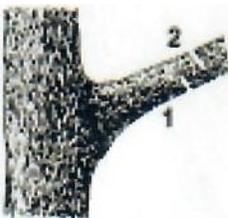
Since each cut has the potential to change the growth of (or cause damage to) a tree or shrub, no branch should be removed without a reason.

Removing foliage has two distinct effects on growth. Removing leaves reduces photosynthesis and may reduce overall growth. This is why pruning should always be performed sparingly.

Over pruning is extremely harmful because without enough leaves, plants cannot gather and process enough sunlight to survive.

However, after pruning, the growth that occurs takes place on fewer branches so they tend to grow longer than they would without pruning.

Specific techniques and tools are vital to preventing damage to trees and shrubs when pruning. The diagrams below illustrate basic techniques.



Use the 3-cut method to remove a large limb.



Guying and staking of trees is done in order to stabilize certain trees in certain conditions after planting. Guy wires and stakes should always be removed after one full growing season. Many people find it convenient to remove the guy wires and stakes after the first growing season.

