



CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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PRESS RELEASE

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CITY FORESTRY ADVISES TREE WATERING DURING DRY, HOT WEEKS

ANN ARBOR, Mich. -- August 15, 2008 -- Ann Arbor has been enjoying an abundance of bright sunny days and very little rain this summer. While this weather is great for people, some trees are beginning to show the effects of the lack of rain. Trees provide many benefits including reducing stormwater, improving air quality, providing shade, beauty, and wildlife habitat; and water is essential for their growth and survival. During the growing season, it is important for residents to monitor their tree's watering needs. Signs that your tree may need water can include dry soil, leaf curling or wilting, and premature loss of leaves.

Watering is most critical for newly planted trees. As a general rule, newly planted trees should be watered once a week during the first two growing seasons if there is not a significant rain event during that week (one inch or more of rainfall). A good watering is about 15 gallons applied slowly, with a soaker hose or a hose on a slow trickle for approximately 30 minutes in the mulched area around the tree. The best time to water is in the evening or at night. This timing allows trees to replenish lost water without the stress of sunlight and high temperatures. Another strategy for providing adequate water to newly-planted trees is to use a water "gator," which may be purchased from many garden centers. The water-filled vinyl gator is wrapped around the tree trunk and slowly discharges water into the root system. Sample tree gators can be observed in many parking lot locations in downtown Ann Arbor.

Established trees are more drought-tolerant. Generally it is not necessary to water mature trees during the growing season. However, if there is a prolonged drought and the leaves show signs of premature wilting, supplemental watering may be needed. In these instances, it is best to water established trees with a soaker hose, placed at least 3 feet from the trunk but within the dripline (the area extending from the outermost edge of the leaves to the trunk). Water for one hour then move the soaker hose to a different location and repeat--do this in three to four places within the dripline. A slow deep watering is better than short frequent waterings for both newly planted and established trees.

Besides watering, placing mulch around all trees can help conserve soil moisture during dry periods. Mulch should be placed 3-4 inches deep in a doughnut shape around the base of the tree. Mulch **should not** be piled on or touch the tree trunk. Mulching and monitoring your trees' watering needs throughout the growing season will help them grow and thrive in your landscape.

(More)



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Ann Arbor has 114,000 residents, spans 27.7 square miles, and was named the No. 1 Healthiest Hometown in the U.S. by AARP The Magazine in 2008. Other notable recognitions include: No. 27 of the top 100 U.S. cities to live in by CNN/Money Magazine in 2008, as well as the fourth smartest city in the U.S. by Forbes Magazine. The city's mission statement reads: The city of Ann Arbor is committed to providing excellent municipal services that enhance the quality of life for all through the intelligent use of resources while valuing an open environment that fosters, fair, sensitive and respectful treatment of all employees and the community we serve.

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