

HELP NURTURE YOUR STREET TREES

6 THINGS YOU CAN DO

1. Remove Lawn Around the Tree's Trunk. Remove grass 18-36 inches back from around the trunk. Tree roots need air in the soil, and grass stops air circulation. Grass roots also compete with your tree's roots, slowing its growth. **Do not hit the trunk of the tree with a weed eater – it can remove the bark and kill the trees!**

2. Mulch. Cover the exposed soil around your tree with wood chip mulch 2 inches deep. Do not let mulch or soil sit against the trunk. **Keep this area free of weeds and grass.** A wide mulched perimeter will keep your lawn mower and weed whacker from injuring or killing your tree. Mulch slows water loss and encourages worms to till the moist soil.

3. Build a Watering Berm. Next to the newly created grass edge and at least 18" from the trunk, build a soil berm 4-6 inches tall and 6-8 inches wide around your tree. In your tree's second year, build an identical berm farther away from the trunk. The basins you create will direct water to the tree's root ball and promote downward root growth. Trees not getting deep moisture will grow surface roots.

4. Don't Over-Water. Trees die because lawns are over-watered, so check soil moisture before watering. If soil is dry around the root ball, fill the basin inside the soil berm 2 or 3 times. In densely cobbled clay soils, provide a slow drip from your garden hose for 1/2 hr. Repeat weekly during the summer and every two weeks in the remaining non-rainy months if soil is dry. Do not water your lawn more than 4 days a week to encourage drought resistance and deep roots.

5. If your tree stake ties become unfastened, retie them around both tree stakes using flexible tree tape only. Prevent branches and trunk from rubbing against stakes by adjusting stake height and tape position.

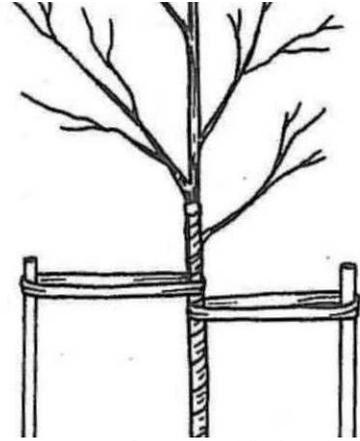


Diagram courtesy of International Society of Arboriculture

6. Don't remove branches from the City's street trees without a permit. An unpruned tree grows better form than a pruned tree. Low branches shade the trunk from sunburn. The City of Chico schedules two formative trims to be performed in the first 10 years of your tree's life.

2009, by Scott Gregory, Urban Forestry Intern and Sarah Hard, Tree Maintenance Worker

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

For more information, including additional tree care tips, Approved City of Chico Street Tree List, and Chico Street Tree Municipal Code, please visit our website:

www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/street_trees.asp