



Tree Safety

Contacting underground or overhead electric lines or equipment and natural gas pipelines can cause serious injury or death. Consider these important safety tips when planting trees:

Location:

- Plant trees and other shrubs at least 10 feet away from the base of power poles.
- Maintain a clearance around pad mount transformers. (two feet on the sides and rear and eight feet from the front) These actions allow PG&E crews to access poles and equipment for emergency repairs.

Planting:

- Know what's below! Have buried utilities located before digging. Call Underground Service Alert (USA) by dialing 811 at least 2 working days before digging. This free service will mark where utilities are buried.
- Look up! Safety is PG&E's highest priority and recommends keeping all trees equipment and people at least 10 feet away from high voltage electric power lines.

Maintenance:

- It is a crime for a person to work within 6 feet of a power line if they are not trained and qualified.
- If a tree, within 10 feet of a power line, needs to be pruned or removed please contact PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.

Trees and Fire Risk

- If you live in a Fire Risk Area, it is important to know that:
- Tree species and location can influence the fire safety of your home. Although all vegetation can burn, research has shown that some resist fire better than others. Trees that have a favorable fire resistance rating are identified in the tree chart above.
 - However, if you live in a fire risk area, before planting trees,

please check with CAL FIRE (www.cdf.ca.gov), your local Fire Safe Council (www.firesafecouncil.org) or your local fire department for fire-safe landscaping tips.

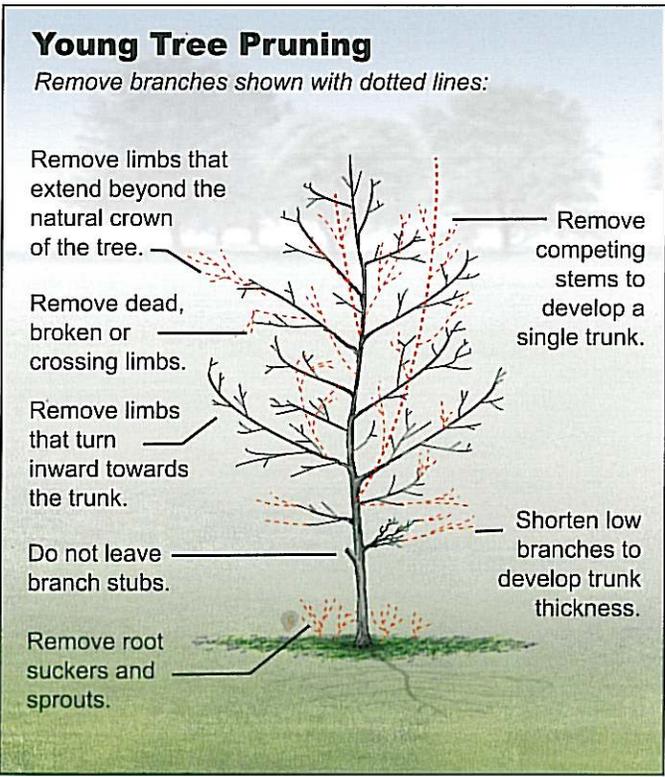
Tree Care

It is important to take care of your newly planted tree. Do not add fertilizer at planting. Sprinkle a balanced fertilizer around the drip line of the tree after the first year if the tree fails to make good growth. Always follow the fertilizer manufacturer's label as to the amount to apply; too much will injure the tree.

Remember: a good mulch layer will provide a natural source of nutrients to the tree and it will help cool the soil and conserve moisture. Maintain a 3-4 inch mulch layer within the planting area. Check the thickness of your mulch mid-summer and renew it as needed. Keep mulch away from the base of the trunk to avoid potential rotting of the bark.

Regular watering is the single most important factor in the success of your new tree. New trees need about one inch of water per week for about two years. This is true for all trees even though they may be native or drought tolerant. Be careful not to drown the roots; they need air as well as water to grow.

Watering slowly by hand gives you a great opportunity to monitor your trees for problems such as disease, insects and broken or dead limbs. You will be amazed at how well your trees will respond to your care.



How to Plant Your Tree

1. Prepare the planting area. Mark an area several times wider than the root ball diameter (the wider the better). Loosen this area to about the depth of the root ball. This will enable your tree to extend a dense mat of tiny roots out into the soil in the first several weeks in the ground.

2. Dig the hole in the center of the loosened area, 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball and no deeper than the depth of the root ball — shallow is better than deep! Make sure the sides of the hole are rough and uneven. In very hard soils, a rough edge to the hole may help new roots grow out into the surrounding soil.

3. If the tree is in a container, gently remove the container from root ball — don't pull by the trunk. Loosen roots with finger tips and prune away damaged or circling roots.

4. For balled and burlapped trees, rest the root ball in the center of the hole, and reshape the hole so the tree will be straight and at the proper level. After adjusting the tree, pull the burlap and any other material away from the sides and top of the root ball. Carefully remove the burlap material from the hole.

5. Loosen the soil near the trunk to find the 'trunk flare.' This is the area where the trunk gets wider as the first roots join the trunk. This point should be visible at the top of the root ball. If the trunk flare is not visible, remove soil from the top of the root ball until it is visible.

6. Place the tree in the hole. The bottom of the ball should rest on solid undisturbed soil. When finished, the trunk flare should be at or just above the soil surface. Planting too deep is the most common mistake, since soil above the trunk flare causes the bark to rot!

7. Stand back and look at the tree before putting the soil back

into the hole. You can make careful adjustments at this time to the planting height and the direction the branches face without seriously harming the roots.

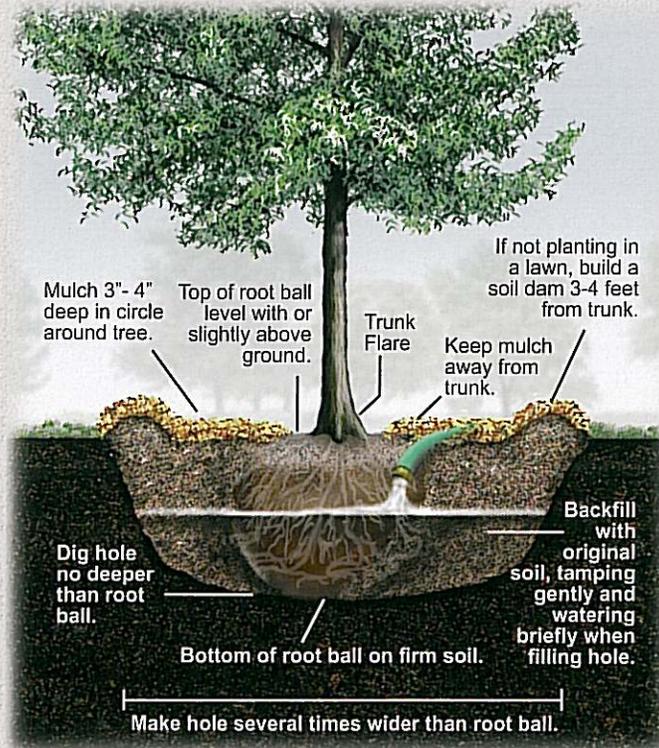
8. Gently backfill with the original soil removed earlier. Do not add fertilizer, compost or other material. Use one-third of the soil at a time. Break up dirt clods and remove any grass, weeds or rocks. Lightly pack the soil with the shovel handle to remove air pockets. Do not stomp on or compress soil heavily. The best soil for root growth has spaces for both air and water, but not large air pockets, which causes problems. Water briefly. Refill and pack again until soil is even with top of root ball. The trunk flare should be slightly above the soil. Water thoroughly.

9. If your tree is not planted in a lawn, construct a small earthen dam or berm, less than 4 inches tall, with excess soil just outside of the root ball zone. This will help hold water until it soaks into the soil, rather than letting it run off across the surface. The berm is temporary while your tree becomes established and, in most cases should be removed two years after planting.

10. Cover the entire loosened area of soil with 3 to 4 inches of mulch (chipped wood or bark, compost, or dry leaves). Mulch will slow water loss, reduce competition from weeds and grasses, will moderate soil temperature and provide a small amount of nutrients. Keep mulch away from the trunk of the tree to prevent disease.

11. Staking (Optional)

Stake only if tree stability is a problem. Staking is a temporary measure to allow the trunk to develop strength — remove as soon as possible. The sooner the stakes and ties are removed the stronger your tree will be. If staked, typically this can be one to two years and no longer than three. Reddy stakes are the easiest to use and are available from your local nursery.



The Right Tree in the Right Place

Use the right size tree for your planting site. Use small trees when planting under or near power lines.

