

Tree Care Guide for Trees on Boulevards

Here are a few simple maintenance procedures to ensure the long term health of boulevard trees in the City.



Did you know that lack of water is the single greatest factor that leads to the death of newly planted trees? During the first two years, your new tree will be equipped with a 20-gallon slow-release watering bag. We would appreciate your help by filling the bag every 4-7 days between the months of May and November, otherwise the City will arrange for the bag to be filled.

Once the water bag has been permanently removed, continue watering once a week during dry spells. Trees should be watered by leaving a trickling hose at the drip line of the tree for 1-2 hours.

One of the most beneficial things you can do to keep a tree healthy is the application of mulch. Mulch, which usually consists of chipped wood and bark, insulates the soil, retains moisture, prevents soil compaction, and reduces lawn mower damage. Aim to maintain mulch depth at 5 to 10cm (2 to 4 inches). Further, make sure to keep the mulch a few centimeters away from the trunk and be sure not to mound it against the tree which encourages rodent habitation and other tree health complications. Spread the mulch wide, at least to the drip line.



Newly planted trees need nutrients to stay healthy. You can use tree fertilizer stakes to feed your tree by applying these stakes into the soil at the dripline of the tree as soon as the ground thaws in the spring. This type of fertilizing method slowly releases nutrients to the tree's roots. Fertilizer stakes can be found at most tree nurseries or outdoor centres. For fertilizer quantities follow the directions on the label. Do not fertilize your tree in late summer; it will stimulate growth preventing the tree from preparing itself for winter.

Tree pruning is a highly technical skill that requires specialized knowledge and expertise. The City is responsible for the pruning of all trees on public land to ensure they develop strong structure and desirable form. However, when your boulevard tree reaches a height of 5m (16ft) you are permitted under certain circumstances to prune small branches. Please call City Dispatch at 625-2195 if your tree requires pruning or to find out what you are permitted to prune on your tree. A Guide to Pruning is available on our website.



One year after tree planting, please remove the stakes and cloth supports. If you are unable to remove the stakes yourself, or if you notice many trees in your area that are still staked a year or more after planting, please call 625-2195.