

National Arborist Association



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tree Planting: Do it right!

Planting trees is the single best “investment” a community or property owner can make to improve the environment, and the value, of a neighborhood. According to Robert Rouse, staff arborist for the National Arborist Association (NAA), “Planting trees is an easy and inexpensive way to increase your property value.” Rouse adds, “Nationally, forested lots are worth 20% more when compared to open lots.”

Cities plant trees for environmental reasons. Trees have a tremendous cooling effect on a community. Their leaves catch the rays of the sun and absorb much of the heat in order to produce food. In much the same way trees reduce soil erosion. Their leaves catch the falling rain droplets, absorbing some of the water and slowing the rest of the water down. In addition, tree roots hold the valuable soil from washing away with the rain.

“Homeowners who plant trees are truly in a ‘Win-Win’ scenario,” says Mr. Rouse. “They can increase their property value and help protect the environment!”

When planting trees professionals recommend a number of procedures to ensure that your new tree will thrive. Here are some of them:

- ✓ **Buy from a nursery that sells only high quality stock.** You can ask your local arborist for a recommendation. Avoid purchasing tree’s with wire baskets.
- ✓ **Prepare the planting hole.** There’s an old arborist saying, “Don’t plant a \$200 tree in a \$20 hole!” The hole should be at least 3-5 times the width of the root ball.
- ✓ **Don’t plant the tree too deep.** When planted, the tree should be level or slightly *higher* than the surrounding area.
- ✓ **Remove all wrappings,** burlap, nylon rope, and wire from the tree trunk and branches. Remove nylon, burlap, and rope. If there is a wire basket, remove the wire from the top half of the root ball. Try to remove all the wrappings possible without damaging the root ball. *Do this after the tree has been placed in the hole.*
- ✓ **What about guying or staking the tree?** In general, homeowners should not stake or guy their trees. It is not needed for trees with a trunk diameter of less than five or six inches, measured at 4 1/2 feet high on the trunk. The only time staking is needed for these smaller trees is when they are exposed to high winds, or a few other conditions, that might cause the root ball to move.

Mr. Rouse cautions that one common way trees are “loved to death” by their owners is from tree staking or guying. “The stakes are put on with the best of intentions but they are soon forgotten. Eventually the wires or straps strangle the bark, killing the tree. This condition is called ‘girdling.’” If you need to guy or stake a tree, you should consult an arborist. They can tell you if it is necessary and can install products that work better and are less likely to ‘girdle’ the trunk.

To find an NAA-member tree care company in your area contact the NAA at 1-800-733-2622 or visit our web-site at www.natlarb.com.

