

VILLAGE OF ATHENS, NY

Greene County's First Incorporated Village

STREET TREES:

PLANTING, WATERING, MULCHING, AND PRUNING

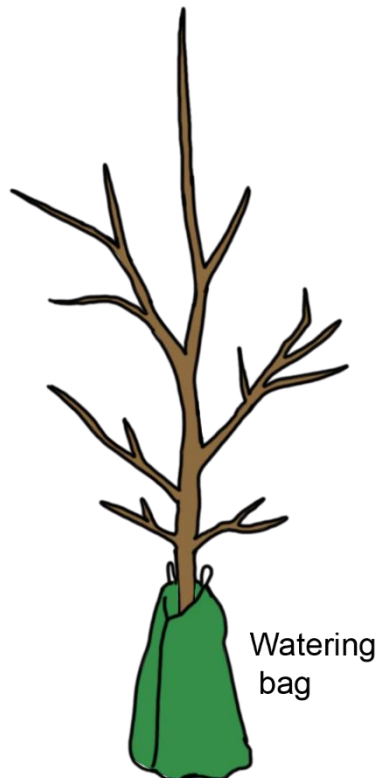
A “street tree” is a Village tree that grows in the strip of land between the street and the sidewalk or within the Village easement. Street trees help to shade neighborhoods and enhance quality of life.

Application for tree planting should be made in writing to the Village Board. Choosing the right tree will depend on the size of your space. More information can be found about street trees and the Village of Athens Street Tree Inventory on the Village website. More information about urban trees in general is available here: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/uhi/outreach/recurbtree/>.

Planting

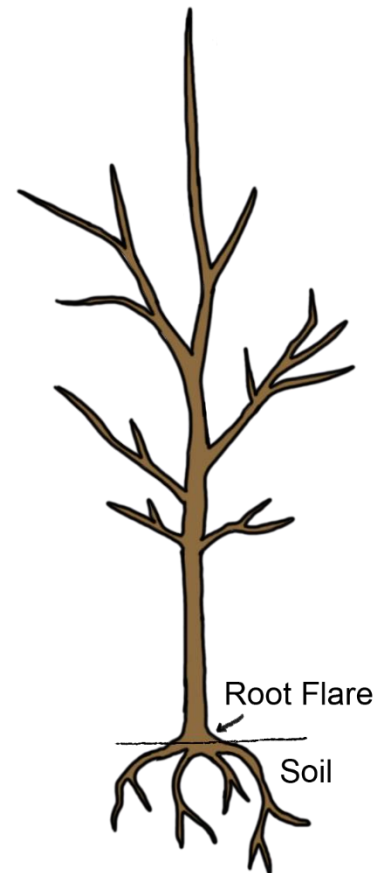
Dig the planting hole 2 - 3 times the diameter (width) of the rootball and no deeper than the depth of the rootball. Loosening or tilling the entire landscape bed is preferred over digging individual planting holes. If compacted, add at least 30% organic matter to the entire site - not just within the individual hole. Avoid planting when the soil is very moist because wet soil tends to glaze and become compacted.

Bare root trees require smaller planting holes and establish quickly and often outpace potted or B & B trees. These can be obtained by homeowners in the Spring and Fall via mail order, from Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Arbor Day Foundation. Shallow rooted maples often cause the sidewalks to crack as they grow larger. Currently the Village recommends against planting maples of any species.



Watering

Trees need to be watered often and thoroughly for the first two years after planting. Begin watering when the ground thaws and stop when the ground freezes. We recommend using tree bags to water. Tree bags deliver large quantities of water slowly over time and will only need to be filled once or twice a week making the watering process easier for the homeowner. Using a soaker hose or garden hose at a low volume will also allow the water to slowly infiltrate the soil. Test the soil moisture by using a trowel to dig two inches into the soil. When it is dry, it is time to water.



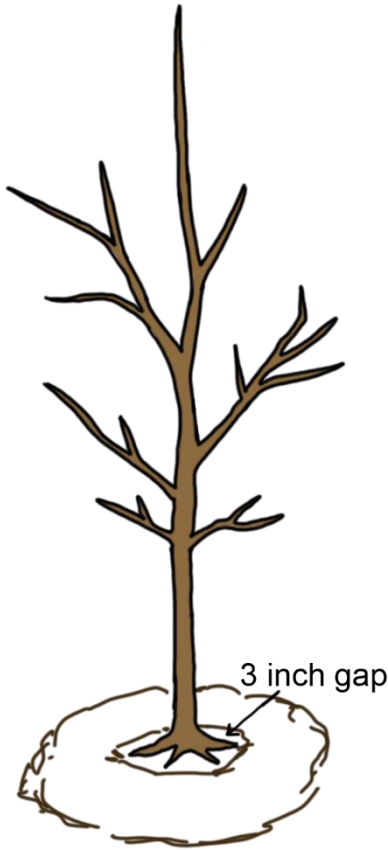
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Mulching

Mulch helps protect trees from lawn mowers and string trimmers, buffers soil temperatures, reduces weed growth, helps the soil retain moisture and if done with an organic material such as wood chips, shredded bark or composted leaves will add nutrients to the soil.

Mulch and excess soil should be kept at least 3" away from the tree trunk. Make sure the root flare is exposed. Excess soil and mulch can lead to trunk decay, rodents, and girdling roots. Mulch 2-4 inches deep and ideally out to the tree crown.



Pruning

Newly planted trees should

be pruned within the first 2 years to establish correct structure and remove defects such as co-dominant leaders while trees are young. Branches should be cut along the outside of the root collar without leaving a stub so that the tree can produce protective scar tissue to seal the wound. When pruning with a saw, the 3-cut method should be used to maintain the branch collar.

Roads should have a minimum of 13.5 feet clearance above the roadbed. All branches below this point should be treated as temporary branches. If the temporary branches are extending into the roadbed, they can be cut back to the sidewalk until the tree has produced higher branches and then removed completely in order to raise the crown of the tree.

