Tree Watering Guide

Helping Your Tree Survive the Drought

Why is it important to water trees during a drought?

Claremont is a community known for its beautiful tree-lined streets. Trees improve home values, provide shade and oxygen, and contribute to the character of Claremont. The City has over 24,000 City-owned trees, many over 100 years old. During this continued drought, the City is asking residents for their help in saving our trees.

What is more important-grass or trees?

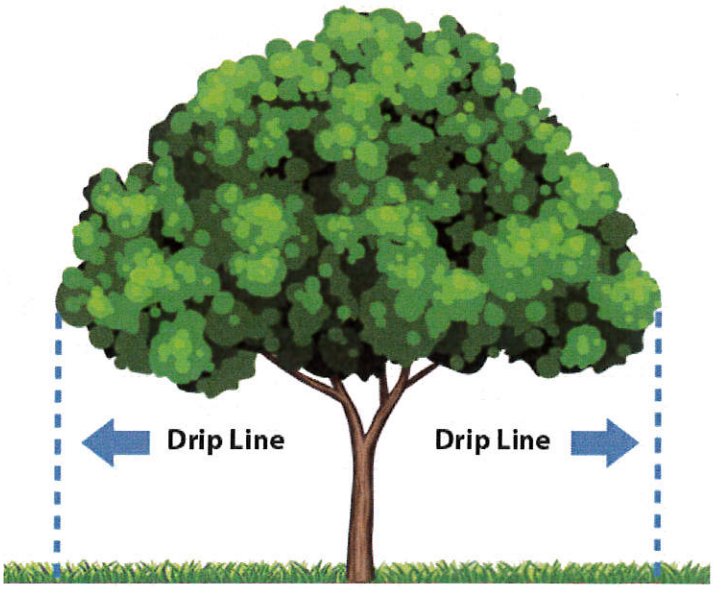
During the drought, trees must be given top watering priority over your lawn. Lawns can be replaced in a matter of months whereas a 20 year-old tree will take 20 years to replace. Caring for trees requires different watering methods than your lawn. During water restrictions, irrigation systems designed to water turf do not sufficiently water your trees.

What does a tree under "drought stress" look like?

- Symptoms of drought injury to trees can be sudden or may take up to two years to be revealed. Drought injury symptoms on tree leaves include wilting, curling at the edges, and yellowing.
- Deciduous leaves may develop scorch, brown outside edges, or browning between veins.
- Evergreen needles may turn yellow, red, or purple. They may also turn brown at the tips of the needles, and browning may progress through the needle towards the twig.
- In a continued drought, leaves may be smaller than normal, drop prematurely, or remain attached to the tree even though they are brown.

Where and how do I water my tree?

- **Deep watering to a depth of 12 inches below the soil surface is recommended.**
- **Saturate the soil around the tree within the "drip line" (the outer edges of the tree's branches) to disperse water down toward the roots.**
- **For evergreens, water 3-5 feet beyond the drip line on all sides of the tree.**
- **The objective is to water slowly, dispersing the flow of water to get the water deep down to the tree's roots. Watering for short periods of time only encourages shallow roots, which can lead to more drought damage.**
- **Don't dig holes in the ground in an effort to water deeply. This dries out roots even more. A soil needle/deep root feeder attached to a hose is acceptable to insert into the ground if your soil is not too hard and compact.**
- **Overhead spraying of tree leaves is inefficient and should be avoided during drought conditions. Watering at ground level to avoid throwing water in the air is more efficient.**



Water evenly at the drip line, away from the trunk of the tree. Water slowly in a circular pattern, allowing the water to penetrate the soil at least a foot down.

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