

QUALICO COMMUNITIES TREE CARE & MAINTENANCE

For information on how to plant your trees please visit Qualico4Life.com to download our Tree Planting Brochure

Welcome to the neighbourhood! Qualico Communities is happy to provide all new residents with two potted trees for their yard. Enclosed is important information tree care and maintenance.

To ensure proper growth and survival, we recommend that homeowners read and follow the guidelines suggested in this document. A tree that is planted and not cared for will die. By caring properly for your tree, you will ensure its survival, and in return, it will enhance the landscape and your property value.

The First Season

- After a tree is planted, it should be thoroughly saturated for the first two or three days to ensure moisture has perforated the rootball completely. For the remainder of the season, the new tree should be watered once a week.
- Ensuring the root ball stays moist at all times. Allow water to trickle in the tree slowly for a long period of time, rather than blasting it with water quickly, as this allows the water to sink lower around the root ball and thoroughly.
- Once the ground is dry 4" below the surface, it is time to water again. This is easily monitored by sticking your finger into the soil. If you go on holidays, saturate your new tree thoroughly before you leave or ask a neighbour to water it.
- Fertilizer shouldn't be necessary in the first season, but a dose of high phosphorous fertilizer will help root growth.

The Second Season

- During the second growing season, the tree should be watered two to three times a month, depending on weather conditions, starting in May for most shrubs and deciduous trees and in April for evergreens. Around mid-August slowly begin to cut your watering time in half, but never let it dry out completely. This process is called "hardening off" and prepares the tree for winter.
- For the first two growing seasons, a tree will not exhibit much active growth as most of its energy is spent promoting new root systems and establishing itself in a new environment. This is a very important step to establish a plant that will thrive.

Winter Care and Frost Damage Protection

When leaves in the neighborhood turn colour and start dropping, saturate the soil around your trees and continue keeping it moist until the temperature drops to freezing.

Just before the ground freezes, it is advisable to thoroughly saturate the root ball with water so that it is solidly watered-in and ices when the ground is completely frozen; this will protect your tree from frost damage. During long Chinooks, trees may require additional watering to keep the root ball frozen and thus prevent damage to the tree.

Once the ground has frozen, it is a good idea to cover the top of the root ball with mulch, such as grass clippings, leaves, wood shavings, etc., for additional winter protection.

Plant material also requires protection from rodents, such as rabbits, who like to eat the tender bark of many tree species, resulting in death to the tree. Use a wire net set a little distance from the trunk or loose plastic tree-wrappers around the trunk to deter pests. Do not forget to adjust or remove as the tree grows to prevent choking the tree.

Fertilizing

Proper plant nutrition and pest control will keep your tree and plants looking their best. Trees and shrubs require fertilizer to promote growth and resistance to disease and insects. Slow acting fertilizer can be applied up to the middle of July as plants need to begin the hardening off process for the coming winter.

Mulch

To capture rain and conserve water, form a saucer of bare soil around the base of shrubs and trees; do not expose any roots. Cover the bare soil in the saucer with 10 centimetres (4 inches) of organic mulch such as bark or wood chips to prevent evaporation. This allows moisture around the tree to be retained for longer periods of time, reducing evaporation and thus reducing the amount of water you use.

DO NOT USE high nitrogen fertilizer until the second season, as this will encourage more leaf growth than a young root system is able to support. As with any fertilizer, read and follow the directions on the container. Failure to do so can kill a tree.

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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TREE PLANTING

Decide what you want from your tree:

- Landscape feature
- Shade
- Ornamental flowers or fruit
- Privacy screening
- Attract birds or butterflies to your yard

Requirements for best growth:

- Sunlight
- Water
- Soil quality (PH & nutrients)
- Competitiveness with other trees and plants

Size of tree at maturity:

- Proximity to buildings, other trees, sidewalks, etc.
- Obstacles overhead
- Interference with views
- Shading

Underground consideration:

- Water and sewer line conflicts (Poplars, Willows & Birch)
- Large surface roots in lawns, Patios, pathways, etc. (Poplars)
- Aggressive roots near waste and sewers services

COMMON PESTS AND DISEASES

Below is a list of the more common pests and diseases that can occur in trees in our area:

- Black Knot Fungus - large knots (abnormal growth) of bark that encircle the branch.
- Elm Scale - tiny crawling insects on tree leaves, twigs and branches.
- Ash Psyllid - small insects on tree leaves, resulting in curling leaves.
- Yellow-Headed Spruce Sawfly - caterpillar-like insect on spruce needles.
- Aphids - small pear-shaped insects that feed on plant sap.
- Fire Blight - a bacterial disease that browns and kills leaves, flowers and branches.
- Ash Leaf-Cone Roller - caterpillar/moth-like insect that rolls tree leaves.
- Bronze Leaf Disease (BLD) - is new to the Calgary area and affects certain poplar and aspen trees.

Dutch Elm Disease (DED) is a fungus spread in elm trees by the elm bark beetle. Alberta is DED-free and works diligently to stay that way.

(Official Website of the City of Calgary, Copyright 2009)



There are many different pests that can infest Calgary and area's urban forest.

Questions?
Contact us at:
customercare@qualicocommunities.com