



# Urban Forestry



Save Our Water  
and Our Trees!  
[saveourwater.com/trees](http://saveourwater.com/trees)

## Water-Wise Mature Landscape Tree Care

Help your high-value trees through the drought.

### Benefits of Trees

- During extended droughts, it is important to remember to keep trees irrigated.
- Trees provide many benefits and cannot be easily replaced.
- Trees provide tremendous benefits in terms of better air quality, reduced storm water runoff, energy savings, and better quality of life.

### Trees and Drought

- Do not trim trees during drought if possible. Wounding of trees creates additional stress.
- Water trees with grey water or recycled water if possible. Make certain there are no non-biodegradable detergents or other harmful chemicals in the grey water.

### Guidelines for Irrigating Mature Trees During a Drought

- Only water on days permitted by your local water agency, and then only in the early morning or late evening.
- Mature trees still require irrigation, but less frequently than for young trees.
- Water every two to four weeks depending on the number of hot days that are experienced. Watering rates for inland areas will likely be more than for coastal areas.
- Trees planted in sandy soils need to be watered a little more frequently, as compared to trees growing in clay soils which generally require watering less frequently.
- Provide a watering basin roughly 4 to 5 feet in diameter around the base of the tree. This can be done by creating a mound of soil in a ring around the trunk.
- Place a layer of mulch 4 to 6 inches deep extending to at least the drip line of the tree to help retain soil moisture and conserve water.
- Keep mulch at least 2 to 3 inches away from the tree trunk. The mulch ring should appear donut-shaped. Rocks, gravel and rubber mulch are discouraged around trees because they raise the temperature of the soil, which causes problems for the roots.



## Guidelines continued...

- If your trees are located near a lawn that you are converting to a drought-tolerant landscape, adjust the watering schedule for trees so that they are gradually weaned from the lawn's watering schedule.

If you have an automatic irrigation system, remember to check for leaks and/or breaks at least once a week. If possible, use separate irrigation zones/valves for trees than zones/valves for lawns and shrubs.

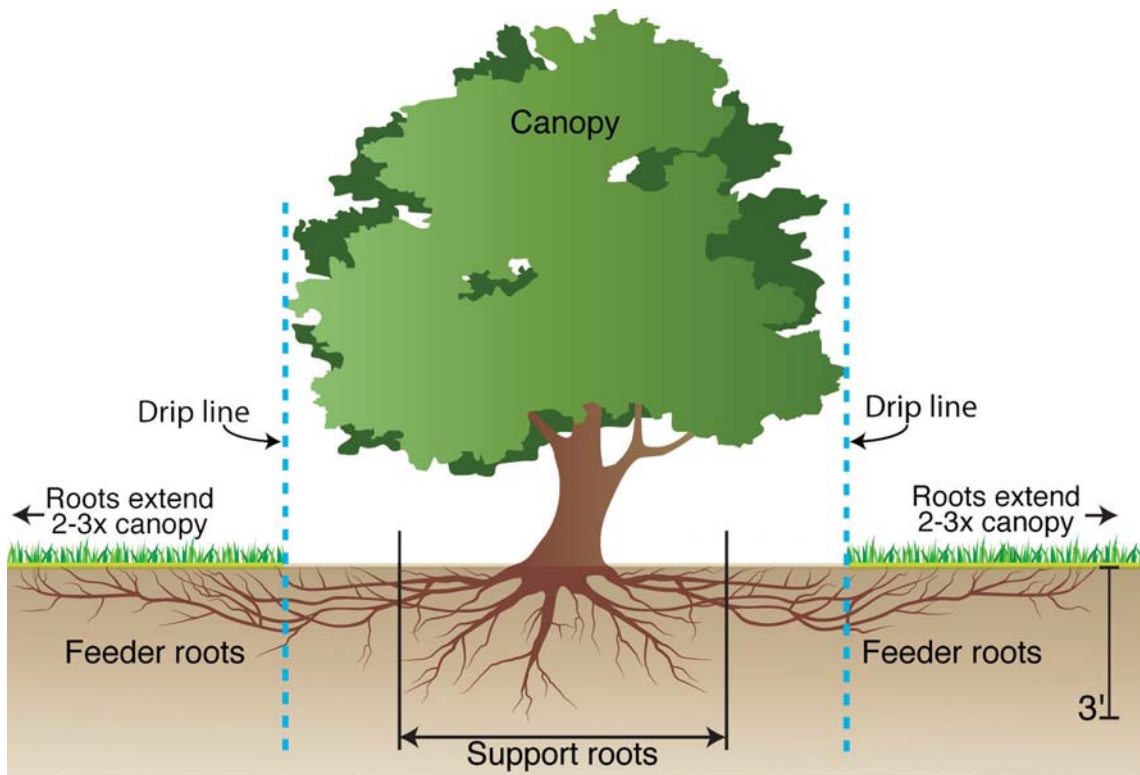


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## Hand-Watering Options



- Place a soaker hose around the base of the tree outward in a spiral pattern outward toward the edge of the tree canopy (drip line) and water according to directions.
- To avoid runoff, use a slow stream of water from a regular hose into the area within the drip line of the tree at minimum for an extended period. You can use a wind-up faucet timer on your hose bib to control the run time.
- Check the soil by plunging a long screwdriver or similar tool into the soil. The soil should be moist to at least 18 inches deep, but not soggy. The majority of absorbing roots are within the first 3 feet of soil.



For a list of resources about landscape water use, go to [www.saveourwater.com/trees](http://www.saveourwater.com/trees)

