

# A Guide to Tree Care During Drought Years

## TIPS on tree watering in a drought



- **Tree roots are not carrots.**  
Tree root systems can spread two to three times wider than the height of the tree. Most of the tree's absorbing roots are in the top twelve inches of the soil. Water should be applied within the dripline (the critical root zone in the box above).
- **Water deeply and slowly.**  
Apply water so it moistens the soil in the critical root zone to a depth of 12 inches. Methods for watering include a deep root fork or needle, soaker hose or soft spray wand. Apply water to many locations under dripline. If a deep root fork or needle is used, insert the device no deeper than eight inches into the soil.
- **How much water to apply.**  
To assure survival of the tree, apply 10 gallons of water for each inch of the tree's diameter. For example, a two-inch diameter tree will need 20 gallons per watering. Use a ruler to measure your tree's diameter.
- **When to water.**  
During fall and winter (October - March) water one to two times per month, depending on weather, temperature and soil conditions. In spring and summer (April - September) water three times per month, depending on weather and watering restrictions.
- **Mulch helps retain soil moisture.**  
Apply organic mulch within the dripline, to a depth of four inches. Leave a six-inch space between the mulch and trunk of trees. Mulch materials may include wood chips, bark, leaves and evergreen needles.
- **Moisture is needed to avoid disease.**  
Drought stressed trees are more vulnerable to disease and insect infestations and branch dieback. Keep a watchful eye for anything that looks out of the ordinary.

For general drought information visit:

[www.ci.longmont.co.us/water\\_waste/](http://www.ci.longmont.co.us/water_waste/)

For more details on watering trees visit:

[www.watersaver.org](http://www.watersaver.org).

SAVE  
OUR  
SHADE



## TREE WATERING INFORMATION

from the Community Tree Alliance  
 Visit: [www.watersaver.org](http://www.watersaver.org)

**Longmont Water** encourages you to visit the web site listed above for suggestions on care of your trees and shrubs in a drought. The web site offers tips from tree care professionals on the following subjects:

- General tree watering recommendations
- Tree watering devices
- Caring for trees in drought
- Planting trees and shrubs in drought
- Shrub watering recommendations

These recommendations were prepared by the Community Tree Alliance, which is comprised of tree professionals from the following:





**Cities:** Arvada, Aurora, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Greenwood Village, Lakewood, Littleton, Louisville, Wheat Ridge

**Other Government:** CSU Cooperative Extension, Denver County, Jefferson County, Colorado State Forest Service, Denver Water, South Suburban Parks District

**Not-for-Profit Organizations:** Colorado Tree Coalition, Green Industries of Colorado, The Park People

# FALL/WINTER TREE WATERING SCHEDULE (OCT-MAR)

(For temperatures above 40 degrees with no snow cover.)

		TREE DIAMETER (in inches)									
		<1"	1"	2"	4"	6"	8"	10"	12"	14"+	
<b>WATERING DEVICE</b>	 Deep Root Fork 2 gallons per minute	2	5	10	20	30	40	50	60	70+	
	 Deep Root Needle 2 gallons per minute	2	5	10	20	30	40	50	60	70+	
	 Soft Spray Wand 4 gallons per minute	1	3	5	10	15	20	25	30	35+	
	 Soaker Hose 2gpm (50 ft w/restrictor)	2	5	10	20	30	40	50	60	70+	
MINUTES Water once or twice a month											

