



## tree and shrub planting and care guide



Congratulations on planting a tree! You've already taken an active role in improving your community's urban forest. But you don't have to stop there! Here are some other hands-on ways you can get involved:

### become a Tree Tender

LEAF's Tree Tenders Volunteer Training Program helps citizens become volunteers with the skills and knowledge to enact positive, immediate change for the urban forest in their own neighbourhood. Each session provides basic arboriculture training which includes a combination of indoor and outdoor instruction, often ending in a hands-on tree planting activity. Sessions are offered at affordable rates and are open to the public.

### attend a workshop, talk or tour

Our outreach activities include workshops, talks and tree tours. Topics range from a basic introduction of urban forest issues, to identifying native species in your neighbourhood, to climate change and other environmental concerns. Visit our website to learn about upcoming events.

## your tree is part of the urban forest!



**EACH INDIVIDUAL TREE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE** in improving the health of our urban communities. In addition to reducing energy costs by providing shade for our streets and buildings, trees work hard to sequester carbon dioxide, filter pollutants from the air, and reduce the amount of storm water that flows into our water treatment system. The presence of trees on your property or street can also increase your property value, provide natural privacy and create a more pleasant place to live. Planting larger growing trees increases these benefits!

## the birds, the bees and the butterflies



**IT IS ESTIMATED THAT ONE OUT OF EVERY THREE BITES OF FOOD YOU TAKE** is thanks to a butterfly, bee, bird, or other pollinator! Pollinators transfer pollen from one flower to another providing a critical service necessary for plant and food production. Native tree and shrub species in particular play a crucial role in supporting pollinators because they have evolved together over millions of years. Unfortunately due to habitat loss, reduced plant diversity, pesticide use and diseases and pests, our pollinators are declining at alarming rates. By planting a variety of native trees and shrubs in your yard you will be providing the food and habitat required to support a diverse array of our flying friends!

LEAF IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION dedicated to protecting and improving our urban forest. Since 1996 we have planted over 17,000 native trees and shrubs in residential backyards.

[yourleaf.org](http://yourleaf.org)



# did you know?

## TREES CONSERVE ENERGY AND SAVE YOU MONEY!

Planting trees around your home can reduce heating and cooling needs significantly. In the summer, shade trees planted on the west and south sides of your home can reduce cooling costs by 25-40% and reduce peak energy demand by up to 30% according to a study by the University of California, Berkeley. Evergreen trees planted for windbreak purposes on the north side of your property can save you 6-11% on winter heating energy needs. Shading your air conditioning unit with shrubs allows it to run more efficiently, saving you even more!

## what is peak energy demand?

**PEAK ENERGY DEMAND** is the time of day and time of year when energy consumption sharply increases. In Ontario, energy demand tends to peak in summer afternoons when air conditioners are working hard to keep us cool. This will increase in the event of rising summer temperatures. If peak energy demands exceed production and delivery capacity, this can result in blackouts or brownouts.

# How to plant your tree or shrub

1. Hole should be two to three times as wide as the pot, and the same depth. Rough up sides of hole with shovel.
2. Remove all tags and ties. Remove the plastic or peat pot. Gently loosen outer roots to encourage growth.
3. Plant in ground so top of root ball is at same level as it was in the pot. Carefully break up soil chunks. Refill hole with original soil. Tamp lightly to remove air pockets. Do not stomp on soil to compact it. Do not bury base of trunk as this can cause rot.
4. Apply natural soil amendments such as compost in a 2cm layer on the soil surface.
5. Add a layer of mulch (woodchips, leaves or similar organic material) approximately 8cm thick and as far out as possible. Form a shallow donut shape around base. Avoid putting mulch against stem as this can cause rot.
6. Water slowly and deeply after planting. Use a hose with no nozzle on a very slow trickle for 10 to 15 minutes. A soaker hose also does an excellent job. Soil underneath mulch should always feel cool and slightly damp to the touch. Check soil moisture twice weekly for the first two years after planting.

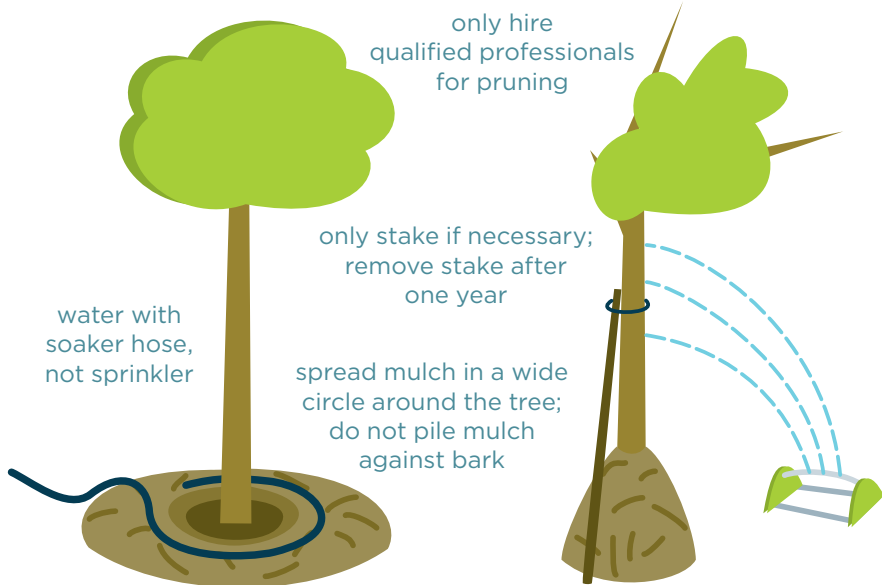


## TREE CARE TIPS

- Water using a soaker hose placed on the mulch below the tree for one hour twice per week; or water using a hose without a nozzle on a very slow trickle for 15 minutes twice per week.
- If soil is sopping wet after watering, reduce watering time.
- Never have standing water under a tree.
- Mulch should be replenished at least once per year.
- Stake only if necessary, not by default. Trees are naturally strengthened when they move in the wind, and staking prevents this from happening.
- Staking may be necessary if:
  - The location is very windy.
  - There aren't enough roots to stabilize the new tree.
- A tree needs to adjust to its new location for at least two to three years before being pruned.
- After five years a tree should be pruned to achieve proper form and minimize future problems. This should be done by a professional arborist.
- Pruning is not an effective way of trying to keep a large-growing tree small.
- Remove all stakes and ties after one year to avoid girdling.

### WELL TENDED TREE

### POORLY TENDED TREE



## Mulch to keep roots happy and healthy



Woodchips, leaves and compost are good options. Mulch should be 8-10 cm deep and spread far around the tree. Mulch protects roots by keeping the moisture in the soil, eliminates competition from weeds and grass and adds nutrients to the soil as it decomposes. Replenish your mulch at least once per year.



## mind the roots

Roots tend to grow outwards from the tree - 90% of a tree's roots are in the top 50cm (18 inches) of soil. There are many delicate roots near the soil surface. Be careful not to disturb these roots especially in the first few years when the tree is establishing itself.

## WHAT TO AVOID

Applying chemical fertilizers or pesticides to tree or lawn • Mowing, tilling, weed whacking around base of tree • Compacting the soil around base of tree • Covering areas near tree with concrete blocks or paving • Tying or attaching anything to tree • Using de-icing salts near the tree