



Caring for Newly Planted Landscape Material

Watering

During the first year after planting, watering is the most critical factor of plant survival and also the most difficult to judge correctly. Maintenance watering begins immediately after planting and continues until the soil freezes. Regularly (every 3 to 4 days) check the moisture in the plant's root zone to determine if the soil is too wet or too dry. When it is time to water, soak the root ball thoroughly by running a hose with a small stream of water right next to the main stem of the plant. Frequent shallow watering may actually do more harm than good by encouraging the roots to grow up towards the surface only to be burned by the sun. Symptoms of incorrect water levels may include droopy or wilting new growth, loss of leaf color (usually yellowing) and untimely shedding of leaves.

Mulching

Leave the area over the plant roots open (free of sod) for the first year or more and cover the soil with mulch. A two to three inch layer of mulch will conserve moisture, reduce weed growth, maintain a more uniform soil temperature, prevent surface crusting, and improve the appearance of the area.

Staking

Stakes and guy wires are used to keep trees erect. This is necessary for plants that are in extremely soft soil or trees that are 2-3" in diameter or over. Three wires are the minimum needed to control movement. The wires are run through a short section of hose or rubber tubing that has been looped around the trunk (not branches) above a branch at a point two-thirds the height of the tree. The wire is then anchored to a stake driven into the ground outside of the area of the planting hole. The first wire should be placed on the side of the prevailing wind. The two remaining wires are then equally spaced. After the tree has become established, the wires should be removed.

Fertilizing

Generally, fertilizing is not recommended in the first growing season or at least until the plant shows normal growth. However, Schultz Starter Plus Root Stimulator is an exception to this rule as it is specifically formulated for new plantings.

