

Street Tree

THANK YOU FOR ORDERING A TREE(S)!

Before You Plant...

- Your tree(s) should be here around the last week in April. We will contact you when they arrive.
- **Call Before We Dig.**
Call: Dig Safely New York at **1-800-962-7962**.
DSNY have all underground electrical and sewer lines delineated so we'll know where *not* to dig.
- **All tough roots** from a former tree must be removed before planting a new tree. Or: select an alternate site where there are no competing roots.
- **Watering** at planting time is important. Please have a connected hose available. A newly planted trees require approximately 1 inch of water per week. It is essential that you provide the water when rainfall is insufficient. In dry spells, deep water 2–3 times a week with a hose on slow trickle.

McKownville Improvement Association
c/o Sue Brown, Tree Committee Chair
Call 482-2355 for information.

T by Fred Breglia, head of horticulture and operations, Landis Arboretum, Esperance, NY

he best time to plant trees is during the dormant season. After leaf drop in the fall and before bud break in the spring are best. Weather conditions during these times of year allow the trees to establish roots before summer heat stimulates top growth.

Whether your tree is balled and burlapped or bare-rooted, the tree has lost 80–90% of its root system during harvesting. These percentages go up with trunk size. As a result, the trees will exhibit transplant shock. Proper site preparation, planting techniques and follow-up care will considerably reduce the amount of time a tree experiences TS.

The following steps will significantly reduce the stress placed on trees at the time of planting.

1. **Dig** a hole at least twice the diameter of the roots, but never deeper than the roots. A wide planting hole helps new feeder roots establish quickly which also helps to overcome TS. Remember most trees are planted too low, but are rarely planted too high.
2. **Identify** the trunk flare. The trunk flare is the area at the base of a tree where the tree roots meet the tree trunk. This point should be visible after the tree has been planted. If you do not readily see the trunk flare, you should remove the top

layer of soil from the root ball. You must find this point to determine how deep the hole should be dug. For long-term plant health the trunk flare must be level with the ground and free from soil and mulch.

3. **Place** the tree at the proper depth. Make sure you have dug the hole to the proper depth. Take time to measure the hole in comparison to the root ball and trunk flare. It is better to plant the tree a little too high than below ground level.
4. **Make** sure the tree is straight and the best side is facing the direction most visible. Look at the tree from all sides and straighten before you start to backfill.
5. **Backfill** the planting hole. Most of the tree roots will grow out laterally. Care should be taken not to disturb the roots or damage the trunk in this process. Fill in $\frac{1}{2}$ of the hole with the backfill, being careful to remove any air pockets that could lead to root death. Press the soil in the hole firmly to eliminate large air pockets but do not over-compact. The tree does need air in the soil to carry out its life processes. Fill in the remainder of the hole by shoveling in soil and pressing the soil firmly around the roots. You do not need to add organic matter. It could change the soil texture and encourage the

trees roots to remain in the planting hole. Fertilizer is not recommended at the time of planting; it's better to wait until the following year to fertilize.

6. **Stake** the tree only if needed. Most of the time you won't need to stake. Staking is only recommended where vandalism is a problem, and in cases where high winds may be a problem. All stakes should be removed the following year.
7. **Mulching** is recommended after the tree has been planted. Remember to keep mulch off the trunk flare; three inches deep is ideal over the entire root system.
8. **Water** the tree. After you have applied the mulch make sure to thoroughly soak the root system. To follow up, remember to keep the root system moist but not soaked. One watering a week during dry periods should be adequate. Remember that less frequent heavy watering is better than more frequent light watering.

In conclusion: Most trees that I have looked at over the years have been planted too deeply. It is better to plant the trunk flare high than low. The techniques mentioned are proven through research undertaken by the International Society of Arboriculture. With proper installation your investments will grow into beautiful long-lived treasures.

LET US KNOW IF YOU WANT US TO HELP PLANT YOUR TREES. 482-2355
MCKOWNVILLE STREET-TREE PLANTING PROGRAM