



ETTER TREE CARE

Tree Preservation in Construction Areas

Etter Tree Care recommends the following considerations when considering the protection of trees in construction areas.

- Barricades or fencing should be installed around the trees near drip line before any equipment has access to the property.
- Pruning, fertilization, and other tree care should be done before construction begins. Keeping a tree healthy is much easier and less expensive than bringing one out of decline.
- Mulching protected root zones with wood chips helps reduce compaction. Mulch should be 4-6 inches deep.
- The roots are the most important part of the tree. They extend out 2 to 3 times the height of the tree and almost all of the roots are in the top 12 inches of soil. Deep rooted trees do not exist in our area.
- Roots require oxygen to function. Covering roots with soil, paving or water kills the fine feeder roots and stops their function until roots are able to grow into soil zones with proper oxygen. Damage is noticeable in the crown 1-3 years later.
- Grading or removing soil from around a tree removes their absorbing roots with crown damage visible in 1-3 years. Any cuts or trenches 12 inches deep cut all of the tree roots on that side of the tree.
- Compaction of soil under trees by heavy equipment or by repeated parking of cars and trucks is as damaging to trees as covering their roots with asphalt or cutting the roots with a trencher. Even “light” equipment crushes fine roots.
- Designate specific entrance and exit routes for all traffic. Do not allow drivers to have unlimited access to the site. Confining compaction to limited areas helps save trees and makes it easier to correct compaction after construction.
- Designate specific areas to be used for construction waste, supply storage, and equipment servicing.
- Do not burn near any tree. Heat and smoke kill leaves and smaller branches. Roots extend out 2-3 times the height of the tree. Do not burn over the root zone of the tree.
- Diesel vehicles often damage tree branches when they are left running in one spot for extended periods. No hot tar pots are to be parked under the branches of trees.
- Oak Wilt is a serious concern and Oak Wilt guidelines must be followed.