

Trees need water

Watering our trees is a very important component of maintaining the urban forest, especially over the past several growing seasons, which have been extremely dry.

Infrequent, but deep soaking during dry spells, will result in a deeper root system, improving a tree's tolerance to drought. Usually trees need a long, thorough watering once every 7 to 10 days. Frequent, short watering is discouraged as it will encourage shallow rooting of trees.

Trees have extensive root systems, which spread from the base in all directions far beyond the crown limit (dripline) of the tree. The absorbing roots, responsible for water uptake, are located in this area in the upper 20-30 cm of the soil. It is important to provide water for all of these roots.

Young, newly planted trees are more sensitive to the water regime than the older established trees. Transplanted trees require more frequent watering, until the root system is established. The best time for watering is in the early morning hours when evaporation is low. Do not water the canopy of the tree as damp leaves may promote foliar disease development.

Trees are precious. They clean our air and our water and make Toronto a better place to live. Help keep our urban forest growing.

