



PLANNING ON PLANTING A TREE?

For the sake of space and time, let's assume you've selected the proper tree for the area in which you plan to plant. **STOP RIGHT HERE!** First you must call Ohio Utilities Protection Service (OUPS) 48 hours **BEFORE** you dig. This is a free service at: 1-800-362-2764. You will be asked a few questions in regards to planting location and what utilities will be notified.

Now is the time for character building. If you have a teenager at home, it would be a perfect time for that young person to become familiar in the lost art of digging a proper hole. As is currently the case if the ground is hard and dry, gently water the area in which you plan to dig, preferably the night before so the ground is not so difficult to dig. The most common mistake is digging a hole that is too deep and narrow. Dig the hole at least 3 times the diameter of the root ball container or the width of the roots for a bare root tree and no deeper than the height of the rootball. In Ohio's hard clay soil it is a good idea to "rough up" the sides of the hole if they appear "glazed" or smooth. This will help water and roots to pass through more easily. It is also a good idea to have the bottom center of the hole slightly raised to allow water to disperse and not "pool" around the roots. The crown should be no deeper than that of the surrounding soil or slightly higher.

Always lift trees by the ball or container. Cut the burlap away completely if it's the synthetic type and at least the top third if natural material. On container trees remove the container if made of plastic or metal. If the container is fiber, tear the sides away. Carefully check the roots as container trees often become "potbound". Gently work the roots out away from the mass. Be sure to check for roots encircling the root ball and if necessary you should get them separated and pulled away. These could later "girdle" the tree and kill it. Bare root trees must be kept moist and planted immediately. While balled and burlapped and container trees can be watered and kept healthy for a time after purchasing, you should have the hole already prepared when you bring a bare root tree home. The crown of a bare root tree should be two inches above the soil level.

Backfill holes with the original soil to the level of the ball, level of the soil in the container or again two inches below the crown of a bare root tree. You may mix some amended soil in with the original, i.e. peat moss, composted manure, topsoil, etc. Lightly compress the backfill. Water the new planting with a deep soaking. Your new tree would like a nice deep soaking drink on a regular basis for the next two growing seasons. You may put a 2 inch layer of mulch around your tree; but, **PLEASE** no mounding. Trees do not like a mound of mulch piled around their trunks. This only encourages insects and disease. Mulches that break down quickly are more beneficial than those that remain intact for years.

Remember that trees increase the value of a property and cool the environment. Some information obtained from TREEHELP.com