

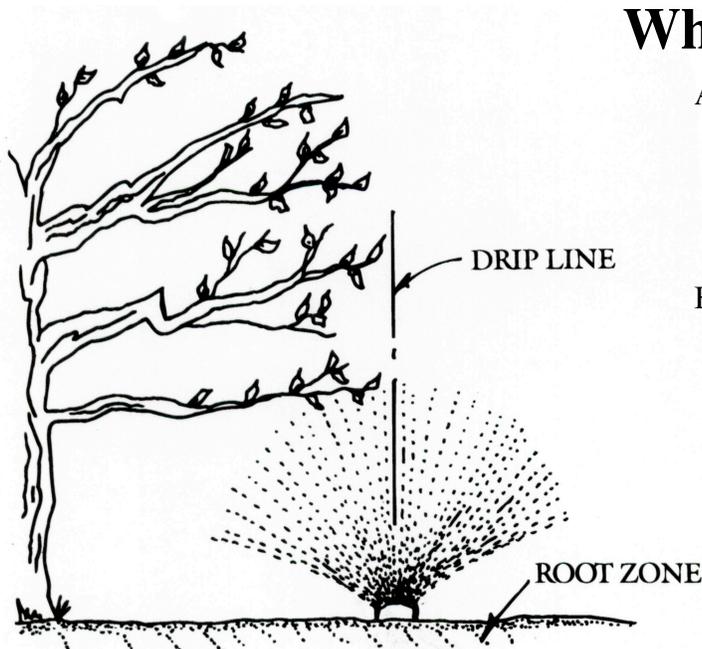
Watering

When And How To Water:

Trees: Once a month, heavily for 12 to 24 hours with a sprinkler, especially in May if it is a dry spring.

New Trees: Once a week for 1 to 2 hours.

Grass: Once a week with 1" of water, or about an hour, with a sprinkler. Watering more often than once a week drives oxygen out of the soil, killing tree roots and causing grass roots to grow too shallow. New seed or new sod is the exception.



Where To Water:

- A. Place sprinkler at the drip line for about 3 to 4 hours, moving it two to four times around the perimeter.
- B. OR cover half of your yard with a far reaching sprinkler over night and the other half of the yard during the day.

Tree and shrub roots are close to the surface and reach far beyond the spread of the branches.

Why Water:

Grass turns brown so we know it needs water.

When a tree or shrub turns brown it is too late to help it.

Mature trees/shrubs in suburban landscapes are under stress because their roots are restricted, unlike in a forest.

NOTE: Four inches of an organic mulch on tree roots is the best method to improve your trees' general health and drought tolerance. Ask for our abstract on Mulching.

Arborsmith Abstracts
practical solutions to common tree problems

Notes on Automatic Watering Systems

- ❑ Automatic sprinkling systems are often set to water too often, and they are designed to water grass, not trees or shrubs. Often they have jets that are **over** watering tree root areas and even sprinkling the leaves of trees that are susceptible to fungal and bacterial diseases that are made worse by wet conditions.
- ❑ Installation of automatic sprinkling systems can often cut through tree root zones causing serious root damage and laying a mature tree open to disease and attack.

When watering your lawn or flowers:

- ❑ If you have an automatic sprinkling system for your lawn, make sure it is set to water each zone **only once a week for approximately one hour or the equivalent of 1" of water!** Unless we have an inch of rain or more, then shut it off until we have a week or more without rain. This cannot be over emphasized. More trees die from over watering than no water! Over watering the grass makes it drought intolerant and forces turf root systems to stay right at the surface, insuring they cook and go dormant in a day or two without water. The prairie grasses of Illinois could withstand anything our Chicago weather could throw at them. Make your grass more tolerant of our seasonal changes by giving adequate water in appropriate intervals.

When watering trees or shrubs:

- ❑ When thinking about the sprinkling system make sure all sprinkling heads are pointed away from tree or shrub **leaves**. We see so many diseased trees that could be easily helped by **PROPER** watering, but which are in terrible shape because of improper watering.
- ❑ When watering your trees and shrubs it is very important to water for long periods of time and then let the soil **DRY OUT** between waterings, which for a tree can take two to four weeks depending on the weather. Use your automatic sprinkling systems to do this only if you can set them manually to run for 12 to 24 hours at a stretch and if they really cover the root zone area of the trees in question.
- ❑ If you are wondering if it is time to water, poke your finger in the soil to check for moisture. If it is hard and dry it is time to water. If it is moist or muddy, leave well enough alone until it dries out. Once a week monitoring is more than sufficient.