



TIPS & CARE for WATERING TREES DURING DROUGHT

Trees play an important role in reducing surface & air temperatures in Texas. Most trees require supplemental watering during drought conditions. Here are some tips to conserve water while still providing enough water to keeps trees alive & healthy:

- Water in the morning or evenings when there is less loss to evaporation.
- Focus on trees and shrubs, not the lawn. Deep water within the drip zone (the area from near the trunk out to the edge of the branches).
- Reduce overhead watering by using a hose, bubbler or drip system instead of a sprinkler.
- Avoid chemical fertilizers as these increase the demand for water. Instead, use compost to improve oxygen & water availability.
- Use mulch over the critical root zone. 2-3 inches of mulch under the canopy of the tree helps to reduce moisture loss & the drying effects of wind. Avoid placing the mulch in contact with the trunk.
- Re-use shower, bath & cooking water; just capture in a bucket or other container.
- Check your irrigation systems for leaks.
- Let your lawn grow a little higher. Shade from longer grass helps to reduce the soil temperature & the amount of water lost due to evaporation.
- Avoid pruning activities (except for deadwood or high risk conditions). Pruning of live tissue causes trees to expend energy to seal over the wounds which could be used to overcome drought stress.
- Avoid disrupting the soil under and around the drip line or canopy of the tree. Root disturbance & compaction reduces the ability of the tree to absorb & transport water.
- When planting new landscape plants or trees, use native, drought tolerant species.
- Avoid digging holes in an effort to water more deeply as this will dry out the soil in a tree's root zone.

Prioritize



newly planted



limited soil volume



disturbed site



valuable / mature

