

Tree Care Guide



Think of the tree you just purchased as a lifetime investment and considering many tree species live for many decades, they are a wonderful legacy. How well your tree, and investment, grows depends on the care you provide when the tree is planted, the care it receives after planting. Tree care is also an investment. A healthy tree increases in value with age—paying big dividends, increasing property values, beautifying our surroundings, purifying our air, and saving energy by providing cooling shade from summer's heat and protection from winter's wind.

Practicing a good plant care program for your landscape plants and trees is like putting money in the bank. Regular maintenance, designed to promote plant health and vigor, ensures their value will continue to grow. An effective maintenance program, including proper watering, fertilizing, and pruning, can help protect your investment. By including these practices when caring for your home landscape is an investment that will offer enjoyment and value for generations.

We understand the importance of trees and the need for easy, effective tree care. So whether you're looking for an easier way to water your trees with our AquaRocks and Treegator®, proper tree fertilization or soil improvement with Algoflash and SoilSyrup. Or you want to help improve growth and increase leaf area with MegaGro; we have the products that make caring for your trees a breeze.

The Easy Tree Care Program

We offer several products that make tree care easy. These products target 4 key areas that are incredibly important to any species of trees: watering, feeding, soil, and growth. If you use our Tree Care packages you'll cover all these in just a few easy steps. Our Tree Care Package covers these four basic steps:

1. Improving Soil with SoilSyrup
2. Better Watering with AquaRocks and **Treegator®**
3. Healthy Fertilization with Algoflash
4. Boost growth and leaf area with MegaGro

Tree Care – Improving Your Soil with SoilSyrup

A vital and often overlooked factor affecting the health of your trees and shrubs is soil. In fact, improving your tree's soil is very often the best possible thing you can do to help it thrive. Soil is not just dirt. Soil also contains large numbers of mineral elements. The soil of a tree's native habitat contains the right composition of minerals and the proper mixture of nutrients and humus to enable the tree to prosper.

When a tree is planted in an urban environment, the soil is almost invariably inadequate for ideal growth. It lacks certain minerals, nutrients and often has low levels of humus. Add to this the fact that most urban soils are also severely compacted and often polluted, you begin to see why something needs to be done. So you may ask "What Can I Do to Improve My Soil?"

Fortunately, there is an easy way you can ensure your trees and shrubs have the soil they need. The first step is the addition of **a soil conditioner like SoilSyrup.**

SoilSyrup helps the tree absorb nutrients and pass on minerals and moisture required for the plant's growth. The second step is regular **fertilization with Algoflash.**

Almost all trees in urban settings will benefit from the addition of SoilSyrup to the soil. As a homeowner, one of the best contributions you can make to your tree's health is the addition of SoilSyrup to the soil. So Give Your Tree The Soil It Needs with SoilSyrup.

As a liquid, SoilSyrup is easy to apply, simply add SoilSyrup to your regular watering schedule or better yet, add SoilSyrup to the Treegator® or Treegator Jr. for deep root watering of your tree.

W.A. Industries: 3655 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, IL 60613
(888) 333-9352 www.MegaGro.com

Tree Care – Better Watering with AquaRocks and TreeGator

Good tree care normally requires a lot of effort. Trees require watering throughout the year. The amount of water they need is based on the trunk size and monthly frequency. In the spring and summer you should water small trees 4 times per month, medium trees 3 times per month and large trees 2 times per month. You should even water during the fall and winter, October through March, water one to two times per month, depending on weather, temperature and soil conditions, making sure the temperature is above 40 degrees.

So if you don't have time to water your trees that often, how can you make sure your trees are getting enough water? By using AquaRocks.

AquaRocks are a water absorbing crystal that can store up to 400 times its weight in water, to help hold moisture from rain and waterings. Using AquaRocks is an easy way to maintain consistent moisture in the root zone and allows for better water absorption. SO you trees can make the most of any water they do get. Perfect for preventing tree stress in dry climates, long hot summers or drought conditions. Stressed trees are more vulnerable to disease, insect infestations and branch dieback. So use AquaRocks to prevent tree stress and conserve soil moisture.

Adding AquaRocks to existing trees is incredibly easily. Simply add AquaRocks to the hole you dig before you plant your tree, or for established trees, poke a number of holes around the dripline of your tree, add some AquaRocks and cover with soil. Keep in mind that most of the roots are in the top 12" of soil, so you don't need to make the holes too deep.

TREE CARE TIP: A trees roots often spread out in all directions for many feet from the trunk. This area is call the dripline, and you can calculate the dripline by measuring the diameter of the trunk in inches, cut that number in half and measure out that many FEET from the tree trunk. So a tree with a 20-inch diameter trunk would have a 10-foot dripline.

Now that you've improved the soil, with SoilSyrup, added AquaRocks to the trees root system for better water absorption. How do you save time and make watering your trees with a hose quick and easy?

With the Treegator® or Treegator Jr.

In Just 5 Minutes Each Week you can effectively deep water your trees. Installing and filling a Treegator® Original or Treegator Junior Drip Irrigation Bag takes about 5 minutes with a standard size garden hose. Treegator® delivers a large volume of water deep below the soil surface, a trees' roots can potentially feed off of this high concentration of water long after the bag is empty. When used in conjunction with AquaRocks, it will reduce the need to water your trees to once a week or less.

And Treegator® is the perfect way to deliver SoilSyrup and Algoflash, simply add SoilSyrup or Algoflash to the filled Treegator® for a time-release fertilization and soil improvement program!

TREE CARE TIP: There is no watering exact watering guideline that applies to every new or mature tree planted tree; however many experts agree on using the following "rules of thumb": *10 gallons per week for every 1" of diameter for newly planted trees and for mature trees apply as follows:* small trees (1"-3" diameter) 10 gallons/inch, medium trees (4"-8" diameter) 10 gallons/ inch, large trees (10"+ diameter) 15 gallons/ inch.

Tree Care – Easy Feeding with Algoflash

Fertilization is another important aspect of tree care. Trees require certain nutrients (essential elements) to function and grow. When one or more of these nutrients are deficient in the soil, the tree will not reach its full landscape potential, will be more susceptible to disease and insect problems, and will have a shorter life than a similar, well-fertilized tree. Urban landscape trees can be growing in soils that do not contain sufficient available nutrients for satisfactory growth and development. In these situations, it may be necessary to fertilize to improve plant vigor.

The main reason to fertilize trees and shrubs is to bolster their health so they are better prepared to fight off pests, disease, and environmental stresses. While fertilizer can't solve all of a tree's problems, it will go a long way to give it a fighting chance.

The easiest way to feed your trees is to use a complete fertilizer like Algoflash, containing both macronutrients (Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium) and micronutrients (such as Iron, Magnesium and Manganese). Algoflash is a water-soluble fertilizer that rapidly delivers nutrients to the tree and won't over fertilize. Algoflash applied during the growing season, will help your trees overcome mineral deficiencies and fight off infections. And it's balanced formula let's you fertilize throughout the summer without promoting weak, new growth that could be easily damaged in the winter.

Most trees experience a single flush of growth during spring followed by slower growth throughout the summer and fall. Because of this single flush of growth, it is desirable to have nutrients available to the tree, as this growth is about to occur. The most beneficial time to apply fertilizer is from when the ground is workable in the spring until just before trees start growing in early May. On sandy soils, applications should be split, half in early spring and half in mid- to late May.

Fall to mid-spring is actually the best time to fertilize trees with Algoflash in most Northern temperate climates. During the fall, winter and spring, trees roots absorb the nutrients from the soil and apply them to important health-promoting functions such as root development and disease resistance, rather than simply putting out new growth. **So use Algoflash fall winter and spring!**

Trees and shrubs respond best to surface applications of fertilizer that are sprayed over the area where the roots of the tree lie. Using a hose-end sprayer is a great way to apply Algoflash. And when you apply Algoflash this way, there's no need to further water the tree like you have to with dry or granular fertilizer or slow release pellets. Algoflash quickly moves down to the trees' root system before weeds or grass can take it up.

Another great way to deliver the nutrients in Algoflash directly to the trees roots is simply to add Algoflash to the TreeGator®. It's quick, easy and gets nutrients right down into the trees root zone.

Tree Care – Increasing Leaf Cover with MegaGro

A trees leaves are it's energy source, converting sunlight to energy and helping the plant grow. Having abundant leaf cover not only helps the tree thrive, but also increasing the value of the tree to your by providing shade. Once you've improved the tree's soil with SoilSyrup, added AquaRocks to the root zone for moisture retention, set up you easy watering system with TreeGator, and fed your tree with Algoflash, it's time to get things really growing with MegaGro.

MegaGro is a growth booster that will help stimulate new growth and increase leaf area, giving you a healthier tree and more shade. MegaGro works on all tree, shrub and bush species for better looking landscaping.

MegaGro can be easily applied to large trees and landscaped areas with our hose-end sprayer. And just a treatment or two will have your trees and bushes looking great!

If you want to learn more about Tree Care, Keep Reading

Tree Care – Signs My Tree Needs Feeding

Trees in urban and suburban environments are often under high stress conditions due to low moisture availability, soil compaction, physical damage, nearby construction, and competition from turf and nearby trees and shrubs. By using our Tree Care products you can eliminate these sources of stress. If you unsure whether your trees will benefit from our products, read on and see if you see these signs of stress in your tress.

The best indicator of the need to use Algoflash or SoilSyrup of established trees is shoot growth. If new shoot growth (growth occurring in the present year) is in excess of 6 inches, then all your really need are AquaRocks and Treegator® to keep your trees moist. If shoot growth is between 2 and 6 inches then you could certainly benefit from using Algoflash and SoilSyrup, and if shoot growth is less than 2 inches, then buy our Tree Care package right now!

Foliage color is another indicator of the need for fertilization. Yellow or “off-color” leaves may indicate the need for Algoflash or SoilSyrup as these symptoms generally occur on trees that are not taking up enough of one or more required nutrient. Always remember, however, that apparently “off-color” leaves are normal for certain plants such as ‘Sunburst’ Honey locust and some maple and ash trees in the fall.

A final indicator of the need for Algoflash or SoilSyrup is the history of the yard. Trees in yards that are fertilized for turf on a regular basis probably don’t need to have supplemental fertilizer applied. Algoflash or SoilSyrup should definitely be considered if shoot growth is less than 2 inches, even if your regularly fertilize your lawn.

Yellowing may be due to a variety of nutrient deficiencies. The most common reason for yellowing foliage is a lack of iron and occasionally manganese. Deficiencies of these elements are commonly due to poor soils that can be helped through liberal applications of SoilSyrup.

To rapidly correct micronutrient problems such as iron, foliar applications of Algoflash are recommended. Foliar fertilization supplies needed nutrients directly to the leaf, where they are needed. Foliar applications can be quickly applied to landscape trees with a hand held sprayer, are effective in correcting specific nutrient deficiencies for a short period of time. To correct the underlying soil problems, applications of SoilSyrup are recommended.

Tree Care – How To Plant a Tree

The best time to plant trees and shrubs is during the dormant season—in the fall after leaf drop or early spring before bud break. Weather conditions are cool and allow plants to establish roots in the new location before spring rains and summer heat stimulate new top growth. But you can plant trees any time during the growing season.

Whether the tree you are planting is balled and burlapped or is bare root, it is important to understand that its root system has been reduced by 90 to 95 percent of its original size during transplanting. As a result of the trauma caused by the digging process, trees commonly exhibit what is known as transplant shock. Transplant shock is indicated by slow growth and reduced vigor following transplanting. Proper site preparation before and during planting coupled with good follow-up care reduces the amount of time the plant experiences transplant shock and allows the tree to quickly establish in its new location. Using AquaRocks and SoilSyrup can help reduce transplant shock of newly planted trees. Carefully follow 6 simple steps, and you can significantly reduce the stress placed on the plant at the time of planting.

1. **Dig a shallow, broad planting hole.** Make the hole wide, as much as three times the diameter of the root ball but only as deep as the root ball. It is important to make the hole wide because the roots on the newly establishing tree must push through surrounding soil in order to establish. Breaking up the soil in a large area around the tree provides the newly emerging roots room to expand into loose soil to hasten establishment. This is particularly important in new developments where the existing soils have been compacted.
2. **Identify the trunk flare.** The trunk flare is where the roots spread at the base of the tree. This point should be partially visible after the tree has been planted. If the trunk flare is not partially visible, remove some soil from the top of the root ball.
3. **Place the tree at the proper height.** Before placing the tree in the hole, check to see that the hole has been dug to the proper depth—and no more. The majority of the roots on the newly planted tree will develop in the top 12 inches of soil. If the tree is planted too deeply, new roots will have difficulty developing because of a lack of oxygen. It is better to plant the tree a little high, 2 to 3 inches above the base of the trunk flare, than to plant it at or below the original growing level. To avoid damage when setting the tree in the hole, always lift the tree by the root ball and never by the trunk. And make sure you straighten the tree before you backfill. It can be difficult to reposition after you’ve added soil to the hole.
4. **Fill the hole gently but firmly.** Fill the hole about one-third full and gently but firmly pack the soil around the base of the root ball. Then, if the tree is balled and burlapped cut and remove the string and wire from around the trunk and top third of the root ball. Be careful not to damage the trunk or roots in the process. Fill the remainder of the hole, taking care to firmly pack soil to eliminate air pockets that may cause roots to dry out.

5. **Mulch the base of the tree.** Mulch is simply organic matter applied to the area at the base of the tree. It acts as a blanket to hold moisture, it moderates soil temperature extremes (both hot and cold), and it reduces competition from grass and weeds. Some good choices are leaf litter, pine straw, shredded bark, peat moss, or wood chips. A 2- to 4-inch layer is ideal. More than 4 inches may cause a problem with oxygen and moisture levels. When placing mulch, be sure that the actual trunk of the tree is not covered. Doing so may cause decay of the living bark at the base of the tree. A mulch-free area, 1 to 2 inches wide at the base of the tree, is sufficient to avoid moist bark conditions and prevent decay.
6. **Provide follow-up care with our Tree Care Products**
Using AquaRocks, SoilSyrup, Algoflash, Tregator® and MegaGro will help keep your newly planted tree happy and healthy.

Tree Care – How To Prune A Tree

Pruning is the most common tree maintenance procedure next to watering. Pruning is often desirable or necessary to remove dead, diseased, or insect-infested branches and to improve tree structure, enhance vigor, or maintain safety. Because each cut has the potential to change the growth of (or cause damage to) a tree, no branch should be removed without a reason.

Removing foliage from a tree has two distinct effects on its growth. Removing leaves reduces photosynthesis and may reduce overall growth. That is why pruning should always be performed sparingly. Overpruning is extremely harmful because without enough leaves, a tree cannot gather and process enough sunlight to survive. However, after pruning, the growth that does occur takes place on fewer shoots, so they tend to grow longer than they would without pruning.

Pruning mature trees may require special equipment, training, and experience. If the pruning work requires climbing, the use of a chain or hand saw, or the removal of large limbs, then using personal safety equipment, such as protective eyewear and hearing protection, is a must and you may want to consult an Arborist to do the job safely and correctly.

Tree Care - Mulching

Mulching can reduce environmental stress by providing trees with a stable root environment that is cooler and contains more moisture than the surrounding soil; much in the same way AquaRocks will help your tree. But Mulch can also prevent mechanical damage by keeping machines such as lawn mowers and string trimmers away from the tree's base. Further, mulch reduces competition from surrounding weeds and turf. An organic mulch layer 2 to 4 inches deep of loosely packed shredded leaves, pine straw, peat moss, or composted wood chips is adequate. Plastic should not be used because it interferes with the exchange of gases between soil and air, which inhibits root growth. Thicker mulch layers, 5 to 6 inches deep or greater, may also inhibit gas exchange.

To be most effective in all of these functions, mulch should be placed 2 to 4 inches deep and cover the entire root system, which may be as far as 2 or 3 times the diameter of the branch spread of the tree. If the area and activities happening around the tree do not permit the entire area to be mulched, it is recommended that you mulch as much of the area under the drip line of the tree as possible. When placing mulch, make sure you don't cover the actual trunk of the tree. Covering the trunk can lead to moist bark conditions and prevent trunk decay, so leave 1-2 inches of space between the mulch and bark.