

Fall Tree Care Tips

Why is fall tree care important?

It is important to help your trees transition from the hot conditions of summer to cold winter weather. Doing this protects their long-term health and makes them less susceptible to storms. Preventative maintenance is also important throughout the year to ensure strong trees when winter storms strike. Follow these fall tree care tips to ensure your trees are prepared for winter.

Urban Forestry Committee Meeting

5:15 p.m. Nov. 13, 2018

West Fargo City Hall

800 Fourth Ave E, West Fargo, N.D.

Four Essential Steps for Fall Tree Care

Step 1: Clean up

- Remove critical risk trees. If you are unsure if your trees need to be removed, hire a professional arborist (tree surgeon).
- Remove leaf piles from beds and turf or grass
- Prune dead, diseased or unsafe branches. Pruning now can help prevent storm damage in winter. It is easier to see a tree's branch structure in the fall as well. Trees are also dormant the colder months, so pruning won't harm them.

Step 2: Prepare

- Mulch and fertilize to help create the optimal growing conditions for your trees.
- Put composted organic mulch under your tree in the fall or early winter to help retain water and reduce temperature extremes in the soil.
- Support weak limbs with cables or braces to prepare for severe weather.

Step 3: Plant and Water

- Plant new trees. Planting in the fall allows plants to establish new roots in the season's cool, moist soil.
- Water, if temperatures permit. An occasional watering before and during the winter months can be a lifesaver. Be sure to water when soil and trees are cool but not frozen.

Step 4: Inspect

- Inspect trees and shrubs for insects and diseases and treat appropriately.



Forestry Department

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Winter Tree Care Tips

Tips for Winter Tree Safety

1. Do not shake limbs to remove snow or ice

When you find your trees bending or drooping as a result of ice or snow, your first instinct may be to shake the branches. This may cause breakage or damage to the limbs or the tree's circulatory system. Have a professionally trained arborist examine branches for signs of weakness.

2. Wrap your trees

Branch breakage or splitting can be caused by ice or snow accumulation or animals. To prevent problems with young trees, wrap their base in a hard plastic guard or metal hardware cloth. Wrapping trees with burlap or plastic can also prevent temperature damage. It is important to remember to remove the wrap in the spring to prevent damage when the trees grow.

3. Stay away from trees with plows and shovels

Be mindful of the trees nearby when plowing or shoveling snow. Damage to limbs and trunks from plow blades or a sharp shovel can be detrimental to trees.

Four Essential Steps for Winter Tree Care

Step 1: Prune

- Prune for shape, structure and health in addition to removing dead, diseased or unsafe branches.
- Avoid cutting branches off right behind storm damage breakage. Cut just outside of the the branch collar and allow the wound to grow new wood and close.

Step 2: Inspect

- Inspect trees and shrubs for ice and snow damage
- Inspect trees and shrubs for insects and diseases and treat appropriately.

Step 3: Protect

- Protect trees with guards or wraps, to prevent damage from the cold, animals or plows.

Step 4: Remove

- Remove critical risk trees.
- Cable, brace or remove weak limbs.
- See above for info about pruning branches after storm damage.

