



Anne Arundel County Owners Tree Maintenance Guidance



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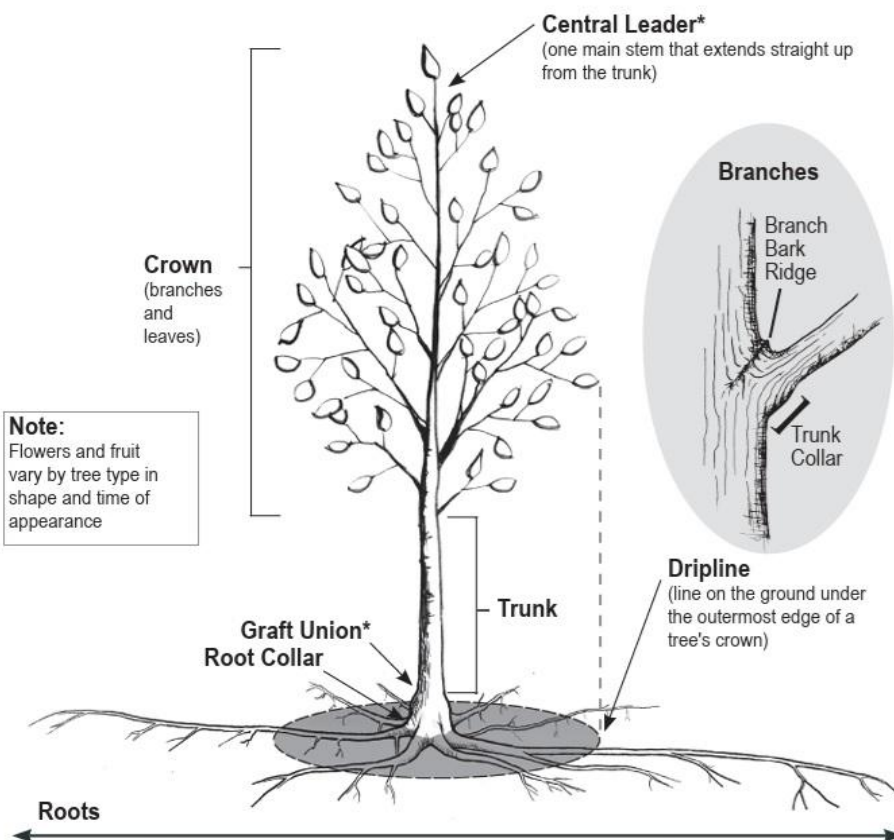
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Owner's Tree Maintenance Guidance

Welcome to your guide for tree care and maintenance in Anne Arundel County. This guide is designed to provide residents with essential tips to help newly planted trees successfully adapt to Maryland's unique local conditions. By following these structured steps—ranging from immediate post-planting care to long-term health monitoring—you can ensure your trees thrive. Whether you are troubleshooting a potential disease or establishing a watering routine, this checklist serves as a resource for fostering a healthy local canopy. It should be noted that this guide is intended to provide a general overview of the common maintenance items that will or may commonly arise with trees. This guidance should not be used in-lieu of a Forest Management Plan, tailored to specific project/site conditions. A qualified professional should be consulted for a forest management plan. All tree maintenance shall conform to the most recent version of American National Standards Institute ("ANSI") A300 Standards.

MODEL INFORMATION AND PARTS DIAGRAM

Broad-leaved Model (has flat leaves, but is not a palm)



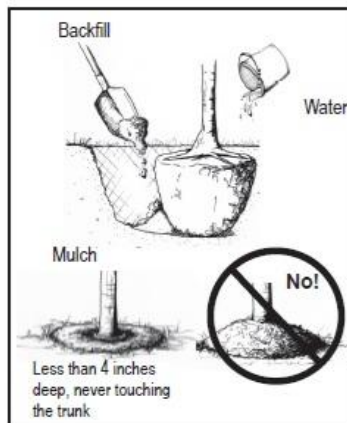
Source: USDA Forest Service Tree Owners Manual - www.treeownersmanual.info.

Care Phase	Watering & Irrigation	Mulching, Protection & Staking	Inspection & Pruning
Immediate Care (At Planting to 6 Months)	Provide 5 gallons of water immediately after planting. Water 3–5 gallons every 1–2 weeks for the first 8 weeks. If temperatures are consistently above 40°F, water every week. Skip watering if the soil is moist or after a significant rain event.	Apply about 3 inches of mulch in a "donut" shape; do not let it touch the trunk. Stake the tree only if absolutely necessary. Use trunk guards as needed to prevent damage from rodents or string trimmers.	Select a healthy tree and check for encircling roots before planting. Prune only critical branches or to eliminate extra leaders at the time of planting. Wear safety gear like gloves and long sleeves to protect against ticks and poison ivy.
Intermediate Care (Years 1–3)	Follow the seasonal rule: water weekly if > 65°F degrees and 1–2 times monthly in the fall if > 40°F and dry. In hot, dry summer peaks, water twice per week. Use the "trickle method" (hose at a trickle for 20 minutes) in the drip line.	Check and adjust mulch levels every spring and autumn. Remove stakes after 1–2 years. Monitor for "deer rub" (bark damage) and keep guards (wired or tree tubes) on until the trunk exceeds 3 inches in diameter.	Inspect the leaves, branches, and trunk every year. Clean the root collar annually. Conduct light pruning in Year 2 or 3 to promote healthy growth. Inspect for safety after major storms.

<p>Long-Term Care (Year 4 to 10+)</p>	<p>Water as needed from spring through autumn. Always water during drought periods exceeding 7 days. Monitor trees that prefer wetter conditions to ensure they receive adequate summer moisture. After 10 years, supplemental watering is generally not applicable except in extreme drought. Signs of drought include branch dieback, leaf discoloration, wilting, etc.</p>	<p>Mulching and weeding should continue as needed throughout the lifespan of the project.</p>	<p>Check for encircling roots every 4–5 years. Prune deciduous shade trees every 5 years and fruit trees every 1–3 years. Prune evergreens only as needed. Continue to monitor for invasive vines like English Ivy or Oriental Bittersweet.</p>
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Troubleshooting & Local Resources

If you see a problem, use these steps before calling for help.



Source: USDA Forest Service
Tree Owner's Manual -
www.treeownersmanual.info.

- **Phytophthora ramorum:** causes sudden oak death, ramorum blight, ramorum dieback, and Phytophthora canker diseases. Call a certified arborist to confirm
- **Hypoxylon canker:** occurs primarily on stressed trees. The fungus infects the tree through injured limbs and trunk. First evidence of the disease is from dying branches. Call a certified arborist to confirm.
- **Sticky Leaves:** If leaves are covered in a black velvety coating, it is likely a sooty mold. Hose them down to remove sap; it is generally not a health threat.
- **Black sooty mold:** Can be caused by spotted lantern fly. Spotted lanternflies excrete a sugary, sticky liquid called "honeydew" while feeding, which promotes the growth of the mold. Manage the lantern fly population to avoid the mold.
- **Holes or bumps on leaves:** Typically caused by insect feeding. This is usually not a threat to the tree's health.
- **Liquid oozing from an Elm:** This is often "slime flux." While it looks messy, there is generally no need to worry about the tree's health.

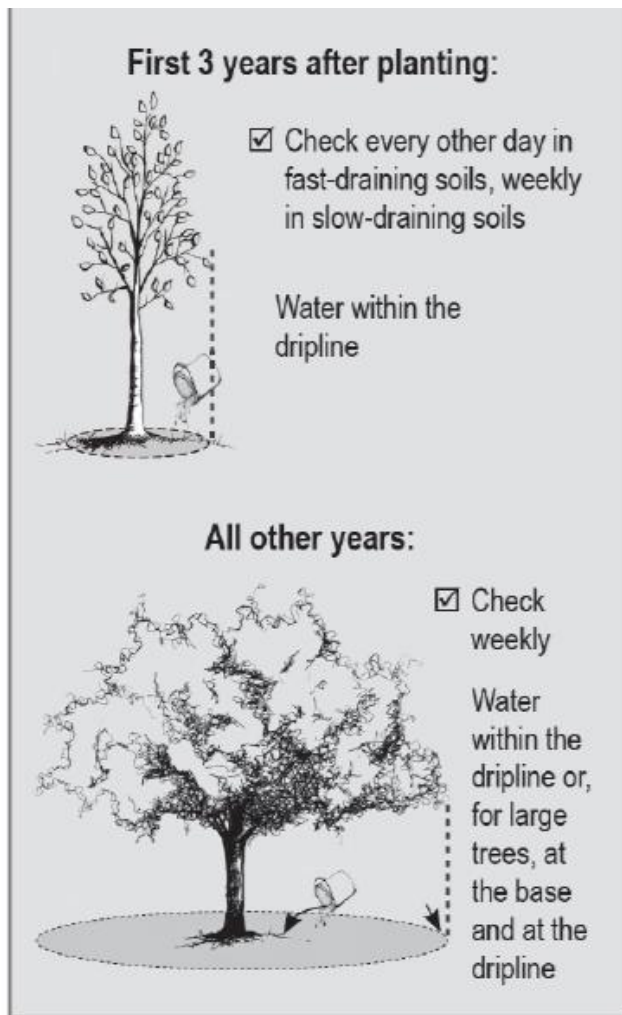


Figure 1: First 3 years after planting: If the soil is dry, provide about 1-1/2 gallons of water per diameter inch of the trunk. Source: US Forest Service Tree Owner's

Pro-Tips

Watering

Watering is the single most important factor for survival during the first 3 years.

- **Newly Planted:** Provide approx. 2 gallons of water per inch of trunk diameter. In our hot, humid summers (July–August), trees may need watering 2-3 times a week if rainfall is less than 1 inch.
- **Established Trees:** During Maryland droughts, check soil moisture weekly. Water within the "dripline" (the area directly under the outer circumference of the branches).

Mulching

Mulch mimics the forest floor and protects against lawnmower damage.

- **The 3-3-3 Rule:** Create a ring of mulch 3 feet wide, 3 inches deep, and keep it 3 inches away from the trunk.
- **Avoid "Mulch Volcanoes":** Never pile mulch against the bark; this invites rot and pests like the Lace Bug or Borers, common in local oaks and azaleas.

Inspection & Pest Control

Anne Arundel County has specific local pests that require seasonal vigilance.

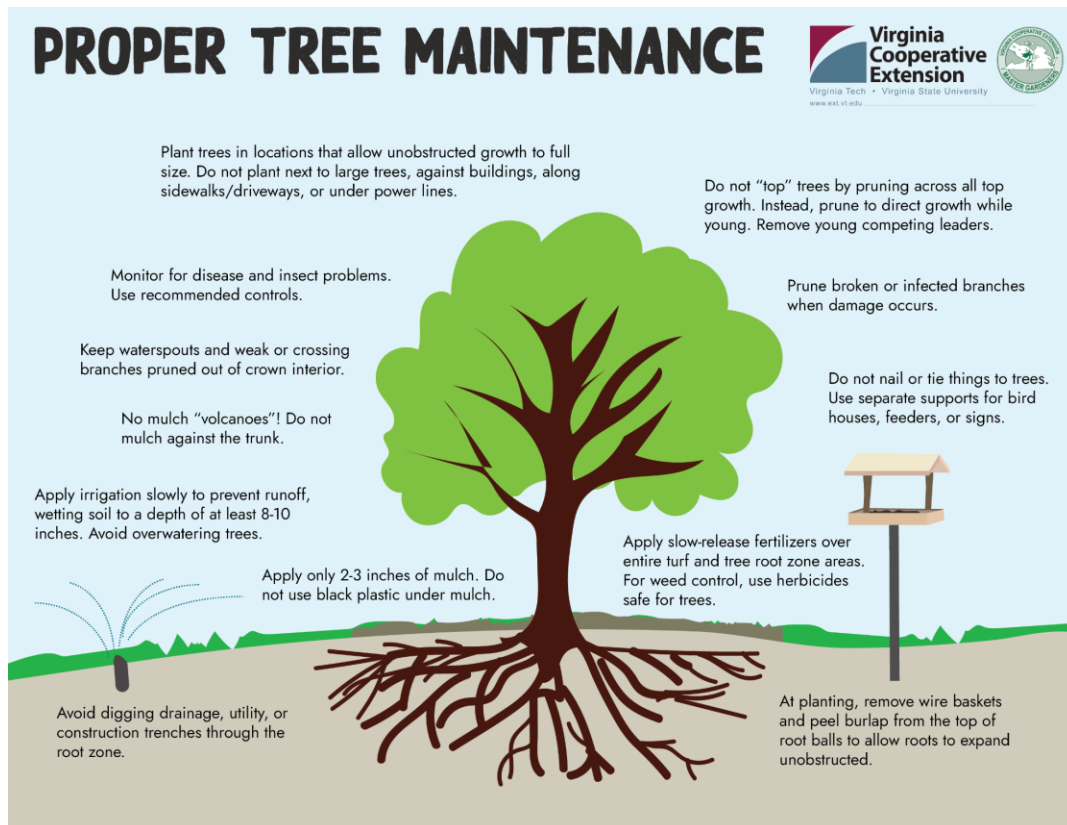
- **Spotted Lanternfly (SLF):** Scrape egg masses (brown, mud-like patches) from bark from December to April. <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/spotted-lanternfly-home-gardens/>
- **Bagworms & Tent Caterpillars:** Common in local Eastern Red Cedars and Maples. Hand-pick bags in winter or treat in early June when larvae are small.

Pruning

- **Dormant Season (Feb–Early March):** Best for structural pruning of shade trees (Oaks, Maples).
- **Spring-Flowering (Post-Bloom):** Wait to prune trees like Eastern Redbud or Dogwood until immediately after their flowers fade to avoid cutting off next year's buds. Avoid pruning during intense summer months if possible.

Restoration & Resources

- **Revegetate:** Once invasives are removed, immediately plant native species (like Ninebark or Eastern Redbud) to fill the gap so invasives cannot return.
 - **UMD Extension "Ask Extension":** For help identifying a mystery plant or choosing a herbicide. <https://extension.umd.edu/ask-extension/>.
 - **Anne Arundel County Forestry:** For additional information on county law, Vegetation Management Plans, Habitat Enhancement Plans, etc., <https://www.aacounty.org/inspections-and-permits/forestry>
 - **DNR licensed Tree experts**
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pages/programapps/newtreeexpert.aspx>
 - **USDA Forest Service tree owners manual:** For more in depth tree maintenance information. www.treeownersmanual.info.



Source: Virginia Tech Libraries - <https://pressbooks.lib.vt.edu/treesteward/chapter/9/>