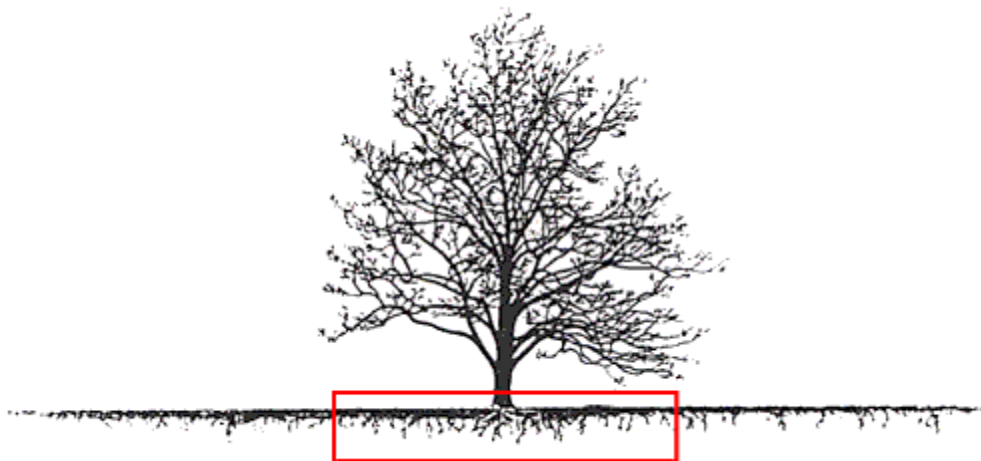




# Watering Trees During Drought

*(Tips provided by the City of Fort Morgan Parks Department)*



Trees are not carrots. Root systems are 2-3 times wider than the height of the tree and no deeper than two feet below the surface. Most of the tree's absorbing roots are in the top foot of soil.

Water deeply and slowly. This will help develop deeper root systems. Frequent and light watering will increase shallow root systems, making for less drought-tolerant trees.

For new trees, which have been in the ground for one to five years, concentrate watering the planting area and the mulch ring, soaking both. Then lay the hose at the outer edge of the mulch ring, moving it around the edge in four to six different areas. Fifty to seventy-five gallons of water is the minimum amount necessary every ten to fourteen days.

For established trees, water the area directly under the branches to the drip line. Larger trees will need a minimum of 175-250 gallons every ten to fourteen days. The box on the tree graphic above shows the location of the drip line.

Mulch helps conserve soil moisture. Mulch trees to the drip line; three to four inches deep with a six-inch space between the mulch and tree trunk.

Water during the winter when the temperatures are 40 degrees or above. Again, soak the planting area and mulch ring of newly planted trees, and the area within the drip line for younger and mature trees.

Consistent moisture is needed. Extended dry periods will disrupt the tree's balance between manageable and unmanageable stress. Stressed trees are more vulnerable to secondary pathogens, including disease and insect infestations and branch dieback.