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Tree planting guide for balled and burlapped trees

- 1- Handle trees carefully, lift weight of tree using nylon webbing on top of steel basket. Do not lift trees by their trunk.
- 2- Find the trunk flare at the base of the tree, it may have soil covering it from view. Measure the height of the root ball from the bottom to the base of the trunk flare.
- 3- Dig a hole 1-3 inches less in depth than the root ball height (for maples plant 1-3 inches high). The hole should not be over dug in depth, a firm base is needed to prevent heavy root balls from settling. Most trees react poorly to being planted too deep. In poorly drained areas or hard clay soils the tree should be raised to the 3 inch above grade level or more. The width of the hole should be over dug 6-12 inches beyond the root ball width on each side of tree.
- 4- Remove any wrapping on the outside of steel basket. Carefully place root ball in hole, plumb tree, and rotate as required. Sight and confirm that tree is slightly higher than ground elevation (1-3 inches) at the base of the trunk flare. This can easily be checked with a long board stood on edge. Back fill one third of the hole using only soil that was removed from the hole. Firm soil by light tamping.
- 5- Remove nylon webbing tying steel basket in place, cut top half of steel basket away with bolt cutters (use caution as cut ends of basket are sharp) and cut away top half of burlap. Remove any excess burlap at top of root ball. Go back to trunk flare area and carefully remove any soil build up on top of root ball that had accumulated during growing/digging. Use wood or soft tool material as to not damage large roots at base of tree. Back fill remainder of hole and lightly tamp soil. Construct a small lip or berm near the edge of the hole around tree or if on a slope on the down hill side of tree to catch and hold any water during watering or rain intervals. Tamp or pack this soil in place.
- 6- Mulch the tree with good organic mulch and composted wood chips if available. This gives nutrition, keeps roots moist and cooler. Keep the mulch 2-3 inches from the trunk to prevent dampness of trunk and possible diseases. Do not fertilize most newly planted trees without seeking good advice on what to use and when. Many fertilizers and in wrong quantities can harm trees.
- 7- Water the tree just after planting to remove air and settle soil. Use several gallons for this and during hot weather this may be needed 2-4 times (every other day) to saturate soil. A caution about over watering, the root ball does not need to be water logged, just damp. Water for the tree during the first year is best delivered by using low volume drip irrigation and having 2-6 emitters over the root ball near the trunk. Watering frequency depends on many factors. Watering 1-3 times per week with 4 spaced 1.0gph emitters for half hour to 2 hours should satisfy most trees. Soil conditions, sun light, species and initial size of tree can affect the watering. Seek advice for each tree. The tree can give indications of water requirements. Droopy or wilting leaves or a dry root ball near base of tree indicate

not enough water being taken in by the tree. DISCONTINUE WATERING during extended rainy spells and after cold weather arrives with significant rain.

8- Stake the tree if over 10-12 feet in height. Use approved methods as to not cause damage to the new tree.

9- Provide needed care for new tree especially the first year. Mulch, pruning, watering, inspecting trunk/root ball for adequate moisture. If ants begin infesting root area use ant control that does not harm tree. Other pest should be watched for especially the first year.