

Volunteer Instructions – Planting Hemlock Saplings

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING to participate in this project to plant hemlock saplings. The planting involves use of a special amendment mix to enhance the soil structure and nutritional content, a moisture retention product to help drought-proof the little trees, and a special initial watering mix containing root stimulator and 5-year protection from the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA).

1. **Dig a hole** 3 times the width of the container (i.e., you could place the pot in the hole 3 times in a triangle) but only 2” deeper than the dirt in the container. Pile the removed dirt next to the hole.
2. **Get half a bucket of soil amendment and combine it with the native soil** you removed from the hole in a ratio of 2/3 native soil to 1/3 soil amendment. Put 2 – 3 inches of this soil mix back into the hole.
3. **Remove the tree from the container** carefully and tickle the root hairs so they’re facing outwards. If the roots are pot-bound, use a sharp tool to make several half-inch-deep scrapes all around the root mass to free them. Place the tree in the center of the hole, and be sure it’s sitting a couple inches above grade.
4. **Refill the hole halfway** with your soil mix. Then **sprinkle the contents of the baggie** containing fertilizer, Ironite, and water retention crystals all around the roots of the tree but *not* on top of the root ball.
5. **Fill the hole the rest of the way** with your soil mix so that it just covers the root ball. **Firm the dirt** with your foot to eliminate air pockets. The tree should now be sitting exactly at grade, level with the surrounding ground. Don’t create a watering saucer.
6. **Apply 2-3 inches of shredded hardwood mulch** from the trunk out to the drip line, pulling the mulch back couple of inches so it’s not actually touching the trunk. This is to maintain stable soil moisture and temperature.
7. Immediately after planting, **water thoroughly but slowly** right at the base of the tree, using 1 gallon of initial watering mix. Two or three hours later, firm the dirt again with your foot to eliminate any remaining air pockets and **water again with a gallon of plain water**. For the next 6 months, water weekly if you don’t have a good rain.



Save Georgia’s Hemlocks, Inc.
Hemlock Help LineSM 706-429-8010
www.SaveGeorgiasHemlocks.org

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INGREDIENTS FOR SOIL AMENDMENTS MIX:

½ bag Mr. Natural Woodland Soil Mix
½ bag Mr. Natural Worm Castings
½ bag Nature's Care Compost
½ bag top soil

INGREDIENTS FOR SOIL ADDITIVE PACKETS:

Use tablespoon for saplings 3' tall or more; use teaspoon for saplings smaller than 3' tall.
1 ___ spoon water storing crystals
1 ___ spoon HollyTone fertilizer
1 ___ spoon Ironite granules

INGREDIENTS FOR INITIAL WATERING MIX:

1 gallon of water
1 capful (2 oz.) Miracle-Gro Quick Start liquid
1 capful (4 oz.) Bayer Advanced Tree & Shrub liquid

NOTE: These lists are not an endorsement of the products named. They are simply the ones SGH prefers to use. Substitutions can be made with products available in most big gardening centers. Call the Hemlock Help Line 706-429-8010 if you'd like advice.

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