

## Tree Water Schedule-Mature Trees

With normal rainfall most mature trees only need to be watered during hot dry periods in the summer months. You can get by with as little as 3 irrigations cycles per year (June, July, August) to keep the trees alive. For better health and performance you will probably need to add a few more cycles by irrigating every 2-3 weeks from June through September.

**How should you water?** Use a soaker or preferably a drip hose with pressure compensated emitters. Start about 2 feet from trunk and make a spiral every 2- feet out to the drip line. This is probably 3-5 rings of hose and will take about 50 feet of hose for a small (10x10) root zone and up to about 150 feet of hose for a large (30x30) root zone. For big trees you may need to attach 2 drip hoses to a "splitter" where you attach it to the garden hose to have good pressure out to the ends of both drip hoses. Once in place turn the faucet on very low, check for leaks and correct placement, run for about 4 hours and check soil moisture. Do you have mud? Then that was too long, cut back by half and do it again in a week or two. If you can stick a probe into the ground to 12-18 inches and it feels soft, that is about right. If the probe runs into hard dry soil sooner than 12 inches you may want to increase the run time. With some practice you can calibrate the amount of time needed for your soil conditions. The idea is to simulate a good slow soaking rainfall of 1-2 inches that deeply and evenly waters the root zone.

If you have sprinklers (sprays or rotors) make sure they are not directly hitting the tree trunk. This causes a lot of problems. Redirect or modify the nozzle. If you can't do that then construct some kind of screening device to block the water from hitting the tree.

