Releaf Kearney

Street Right-of-Way Tree Planting Information

The City of Kearney encourages you to plant trees on the City right-of-way.

- To plant a tree, a free street right-of-way tree permit must be obtained from the Kearney Park and Recreation Department, place stake at planting site (5' to 20' from back of curb), call for approval at 251-3139.
- The type of tree must be on the City of Kearney **approved street tree list and be a minimum one inch (1") caliper measured six inches from ground level.**
- Street tree planting locations will be approved by the Kearney Park and Recreation Department.
- If there is not adequate space to plant and accommodate the mature size of a street tree on the city right-of-way, then consideration shall be given to planting on private property per Kearney City Code Section 7-504. Insufficient space on the city right-of-way and/or private property shall mean that no street tree shall be planted. This determination shall be made by Kearney Park and Recreation Department as per Kearney City Code Section 7- 508.
- In order to avoid underground utility conflicts, after we have marked the location for the proposed tree, please call Diggers' Hotline at 1-800-331-5666. They require a 48-hour advance notice.
- If there are overhead wires, plant a tree that will not interfere with them at its mature height. Nurseries should be able to suggest appropriate species. Consult the tree list.
- Avoid the 40' x 40' visibility triangle at intersections. (Corner lots only.)
- Street tree pruning standards require 14' of clearance on the street side and 7' over the sidewalk; due to this requirement conifers (evergreens) of all species should be avoided.
- Do not stake the tree unless it really needs to be staked and even then leave the ties slightly loose. Remove the staking after the first year.
- Water newly planted trees thoroughly once a week during dry periods. Trees less than 5 years old need at least 15 gallons of water at a time. It's easy to water your trees: Put your hose under the crown of the tree and run water slowly for 1 hour for every 1 inch of trunk diameter.
- Check the soil moisture an inch below the mulch (addressed below) once a week. If the soil is moist, the tree does not need to be watered.
- Avoid over watering newly planted trees, especially in poorly drained soils, since this can kill the young trees.
- Water in the early part of the day to avoid evaporation. Watering of street right-of-way trees is the responsibility of each property owner.
- Avoid planting flowers or other competing vegetation under the tree during its establishment period. Also avoid trying to grow turf right up to the tree's trunk.
- Avoid "weed-whipping" and/or scarring the young tree's tender bark with "mower blight'. These mistakes kill and put severe stress on a lot of young trees. Mulching can help you to avoid this problem. Establish and maintain a 3" to 4" layer of shredded bark or wood chip mulch around your trees.
- Do not heap the mulch around the tree trunk; keep the mulch a few inches away from the trunk of the tree. This will help prevent damage to your tree from excessive moisture and rodent damage. As your tree grows older, the mulched area should be maintained and expanded with the tree.
- Mulch is helpful to the tree by holding moisture, reducing weeds, and preventing damage from weed whips and lawn mowers.
- Remove nursery tags and all other items hanging from the tree. As the tree grows, plastic tags, wires, string, etc. can constrict it.
- Avoid the urge to hang a birdhouse, bird feeder, or other items from the tree until after it is established and sturdy enough to support these. A post-mounted house or feeder nearby may be one solution to this problem.
- Periodically check public trees adjacent to your property to help prevent or correct problems.

If you have questions, feel free to call Kearney Park and Recreation at 251-3139. Thank you for caring for our urban forest!