



## **2012/2013 Annual Tree Guide The City of Sterling Tree Board**

### **Tree Care**

The Sterling Tree Board will be aware and take measures to educate the community to insects or diseases that pose a serious threat to Sterling's urban forest. The Tree Board will alert and work to enforce Illinois statutes regarding such agents. The Tree Board may order the pruning or removal of any street or public tree which poses an imminent physical hazard to persons or property. In addition, as directed by Illinois statutes, the Tree Board may order the removal of wood products, any tree, public or private, confirmed to have such pests, disease carrying agents, or hazards as identified in the following titles and Illinois statutes:

- 505 Illinois Compiled Statutes 90/1 through 90/30, insect and pest and plant disease act
- 65 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/11-20-11, Dutch elm disease (control and eradication)
- 65 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/11-20-12, Dutch elm disease (removal of trees costs)
- 65 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/11-20-11, control and eradication of fungus (Illinois municipal code)
- 30 Illinois Compiled Statutes 735/1 through 735/7, urban and community forestry assistance act
- 20 Illinois Compiled Statutes 805/63, protection of forests

### **Tree Preservation**

To promote the preservation of the City of Sterling's urban forest, the Tree Board will take the following measures:

1. Ensure city workers are properly trained and confirm that private contractors are properly licensed in urban tree care. Utilize trimming permits to specify all requirements. It should be the duty of the Tree Board to promote continuing education seminars for public and private tree care professionals as needed.
2. There shall be no "topping" of street or public trees. *Topping* refers to the severe cutting back of limbs to stubs to such a degree so as to remove the normal canopy and disfigure the tree.

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3. Pruning enhances tree health, eliminates hazards, and, timed correctly, reduces or prevents harmful insects and disease. The highest priorities for pruning work are trees obstructing views near street signs, or at intersections, and those trees that have rot, wounds, or substantial deadwood that threaten persons or property.

4. Stumps of all street tree removals shall be ground to below surface level or removed.

5. Maintain a healthy schedule of watering when the climate warrants additional watering.

### **Tree Pruning**

See "USDA HOW to Prune Trees"

### **Tree Planting & Replanting**

#### **PRE-PLANTING AND TREE SELECTION CRITERIA**

1. Call JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) 1-800-892-0123 or other appropriate utility locators to determine the existence of underground utilities.
2. Observe and record additional site restrictions.
3. Species and site information must be analyzed to determine if the species matches the site.

#### **TREE SELECTION STANDARDS**

1. All tree species must be selected and matched to site.
2. No park grade trees shall be utilized.
3. Planting stock shall be free of insect and disease problems.
4. Trees with known incompatible grafts shall not be used.
5. All excessive soils above root flare including excessive soil packed above the root flare must be removed before or during tree planting.

#### **SITE SELECTION STANDARDS**

1. Adequate space shall be provided to allow for unobscured and non-detrimental growth of the tree.
2. The Sterling Tree Ordinance shall be used as a guide for tree spacing and placement in relation to curbs and utilities.

#### **TREE PLANTING TECHNIQUES**

1. Trees shall be planted with the root flare at grade for all areas except those

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- areas with excessive water.
2. In areas where seepage is a problem, the first priority will be to select flood plain species or trees that are resistant to excessive water. A secondary strategy will be to plant the trees no higher than 2-3 inches above grade as long as those sites are re-graded to help avoid exposure of the original B&B ball or tree roots.
  3. Tree planting details
    - a. The original soil unless it lacks the basic properties necessary to grow plants, shall be used instead of amendments.
    - b. Nylon, ropes, nylon-based burlap shall be removed prior to tree planting.
    - c. Non-nylon based burlap and wire baskets shall be removed from the top two-thirds of the planting hole. Once the tree planting is complete, exposed burlap or ropes will be considered unacceptable.
    - d. Trees shall be watered after planting to eliminate air pockets.
    - e. Trees should have a donut shaped mulch ring placed around them no higher than 1 inch around the trunk.

#### POST-PLANTING TREE CARE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Trees shall not be staked unless the site is subject to high winds and has unstable soils. Stakes shall be removed within the first year after planting.
2. During the first and second years after planting, trees shall be watered as to provide enough water to saturate the top one foot of soil within the drip line once every ten to fourteen days if adequate rainfall has not occurred.
3. Trees should receive fine pruning according to American National Standards Institute plus National Arborist Association or International Society of Arboriculture standards as needed during the first five years after planting.
4. Trees shall be inspected monthly for insect and disease and stress. Corrective action shall be taken.

### **Tree Removal & Disposition**

Tree removal is recommended by the Tree Board when a tree:

- is dead, dying, or considered irreparably hazardous
- is causing an obstruction or is crowding and causing harm to other trees and the situation is impossible to correct through pruning
- is to be replaced by a more suitable specimen
- should be removed to allow for construction

For the City of Sterling to remove larger trees, they will contact a tree removal company.

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