

Tree Care Calendar

January-February:

- **Prune most trees while they are dormant.**

March:

- **Check for eggs and pests on branches, particularly wooly adelgid white “cottony” egg sacs on hemlocks.**
- **Spray dormant oil in March before the trees bud.**
- **Fertilize spring flowering trees as they begin to bud.**

April:

- **Keep an eye out for pests; look for egg masses along the branches, and carefully scrape them off and destroy.**
- **Tent caterpillar nests are visible now; destroy them early.**
- **Yellow egg masses might be lady beetles-- helpful predators.**
- **Celebrate Arbor Day, the last Friday in April in New York State, by planting a tree; be sure to provide 1-2 “ of water/ week; water deeply so that roots grow down to seek water and are protected.**
- **Weed around the trunks; weeds steal water and nutrients from the tree; remove grass.**

- **As mowing starts, protect the tree trunks from getting damaged by mowers and string trimmers. Mulching will leave a safe distance. Keep mulch only 2-3 “ deep and do not let the mulch touch trunks; it provides an entry for pests. No mulch ‘volcanoes’!**

May:

- **Continue to plant containerized trees; keep watering—a rain gauge will let you know if you need to provide water and how much.**
- **Prune spring flowering trees after bloom; remove water sprouts and suckers which steal energy from the tree.**

June:

- **Continue to water any new trees; each week, new trees need 10 gallons of water for every trunk-inch in diameter (measured 6 “ from the ground.)**
- **Finish pruning evergreens; the new growth must harden off before winter.**
- **Prune maples, birches and walnuts now or in winter to avoid ‘bleeding’ of the sap.**

July-August:

- **Keep watering! It is the no. 1 thing you can do to help your new trees survive.**
- **Even older trees may need a thorough soaking once every month or two if it is very**

dry, they are wilting, losing leaves or changing color early.

September:

- **Water new trees somewhat less so that that new growth can harden for winter, but continue to water until the ground freezes if there is not enough rainfall.**
- **Trees may be planted now and into October, or until about 6 weeks before the first frost (often late in November.)**
- **Double check any trees planted this spring. Are they growing straight? If they are leaning, tie them up now since roots will quickly become solid.**

October:

- **Water any new plants regularly. They should go into winter well hydrated.**
- **Use leaves; they contain a lot of nutrition so put the healthy ones into a compost pile, in the garden beds, or just mulch them in place on the lawn with a mower.**
- **Protect trees. Use trunk guards, netting, chicken wire and/or repellent to safeguard your plantings. Protect plants, especially arborvitae, from deer; wrapping the plants with burlap or netting. Deer will eat the bark and shoots as well as rub their antlers on the bark of a small tree, often destroying it.**

November:

- **Finish up the tree protection. Wrap trunks with guards or chicken wire since voles and other small creatures will eat the bark, even under the snow. They can kill a tree by girdling it.**
- **Arborvitae can pull apart from the weight of the snow; tie the branches together to protect them.**

December:

- **Shop the garden catalogues for new trees!**