

Tree E-News

From the Urban and Community Forestry Division of the
Colorado State Forest Service
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Urban and Community Forestry

Tree City USA: During the month of December many Colorado communities are assembling their background information for submission with their recertification applications. The official submission deadline is December 31st to your local Colorado State Forest Service District Office. Communities successfully meeting the four standards required to be a Tree City USA will be recognized in early 2010 for the work they have completed in 2009. In 2008, Colorado had 95 Tree City USA communities. In that group there were 12 communities that received a Growth Award.



Communities that receive a *Growth Award* have demonstrated their commitment to trees by accomplishing higher levels of tree care. These communities must accumulate at least 10 points from any of the following categories:

1. Category A: *Education and Public Relations*
2. Category B: *Partnerships*
3. Category C: *Planning and Management*
4. Category D: *Tree Planting and Maintenance*

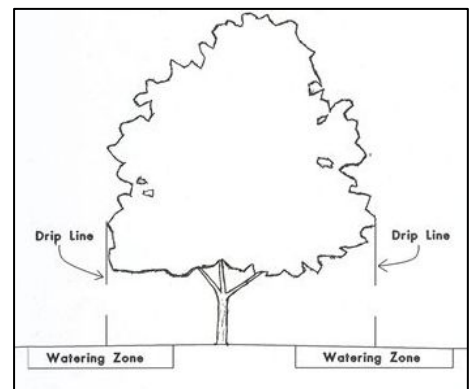
Here are some examples of projects that qualify and the points they carry: 1) Continuing education program for Tree Board members (6 points), 2) Tree-care workshop (4 points), 3) Tree inventory and analysis (7 points), 4) Improved ordinance (6 points), 5) Wildlife habitat created (3 points), 6) Street-tree planting program significantly improved (7 points), 7) Biomass recycling program established (6 points).

Winter Watering: The fall months in Western Colorado are usually sunny and dry. A dry autumn leads to fantastic yellow to red leaf color production, especially for trees in the cottonwood, ornamental pear, maple, and ash groups. These leaf displays make living in Western Colorado a pleasure.

However, National Weather Service predictions for this coming winter are calling for El Niño conditions from December through March. On average, Colorado will experience above normal winter temperatures during an El Niño year. If you couple higher temperatures with below normal precipitation, as we are presently experiencing, you get stress-inducing conditions for woody plants.

To alleviate this stress, water should be delivered to the tree root zone during the winter. The majority of the tree roots can be found in the upper fourteen inches of the soil profile. The goal of winter watering should be to deliver water to that tree root zone. Experts all agree on some simple winter watering rules:

1. Apply water when the daytime temperatures are above freezing and when the soil is not frozen.
2. Deliver water slowly to facilitate a thorough soaking of the soil profile (i.e. use a soaker hose).
3. Avoid allowing water to pool near the root crown where it can freeze and damage the bark.
4. Test how far the water has saturated the soil by inserting a soil probe or long screw driver.
5. Water at least two times during the winter months.



CSU Extension produces a very informative sheet that discusses winter watering in more detail and is available from this website: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/Garden/07211.html>.

Diagram: Cheyenne Urban Forestry