



Town of Watertown Office of the Tree Warden

Administration Building • 149 Main Street • Watertown, MA 02472

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Dear Property Owner:

Recently, the Town of Watertown planted a tree in front of your home. Although the tree is town property and the actual maintenance is the town's responsibility (for private plantings the town is responsible for the tree for one year from its planting date), I would like to request your volunteer efforts during this tree's critical maturation period.

The following are some helpful tips and information:

- **Watering.** Please water five gallons once a week for the first year during the growing season (April through October). Watering is not necessary during the winter months or during summer months when rainfall has been abundant.
- **Mulch.** This new tree has been mulched. A layer of two to three inches is all that is needed. If the mulch thins out, please use organic mulches, such as ground bark, old woodchips, pine needles and different hull materials. They are good to retain soil moisture, moderate soil temperature, and control competing grass and weeds. Do not allow it to touch the bark and **please do not mound it up around the trunk of the tree.** It is best to keep it three inches away from the trunk. Excessive amounts of mulch can strangle the tree.
- **Stakes.** Your tree may have been staked to establish the tree. If your tree received stakes, I will be removing them within a year of planting. After one year of having stakes, a tree left to blow a little with the wind develops a stronger trunk.
- **Parking.** Please do not park within a 15 feet radius of the tree. Foot traffic, bicycles or other weight on the soil near a tree can damage fine root hairs needed for the tree to take up nutrients.
- **Flowers/Grass.** Please do not plant flowers or spread grass seed around the tree. Vital roots that feed a tree are in the top six inches of soil; flowers and grass compete for necessary water and nutrients.
- **Fertilizer.** Please do not fertilize the tree. A slow release fertilizer has been added to this planting.
- **Pruning.** Please do not prune this tree. Damage done by incorrect pruning is often catastrophic and irreversible. Please call my office at (617) 972-6426 regarding any pruning issues.
- **Donation.** We ask residents who requested trees to be planted near their home to donate \$95 per tree to the Watertown Tree Fund. This voluntary contribution helps defray the total cost of planting which is approximately \$420 per tree. Your gift will be deposited and used to purchase and maintain additional public trees. Please make out the check to the Town of Watertown.

Thank you for your valuable contribution of time and money. This partnership is key to the Town's ability to steward its rich tree resource. I hope this new tree brings you much enjoyment through the seasons.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Hayward, MCA
Tree Warden