

Tree Watering Guide

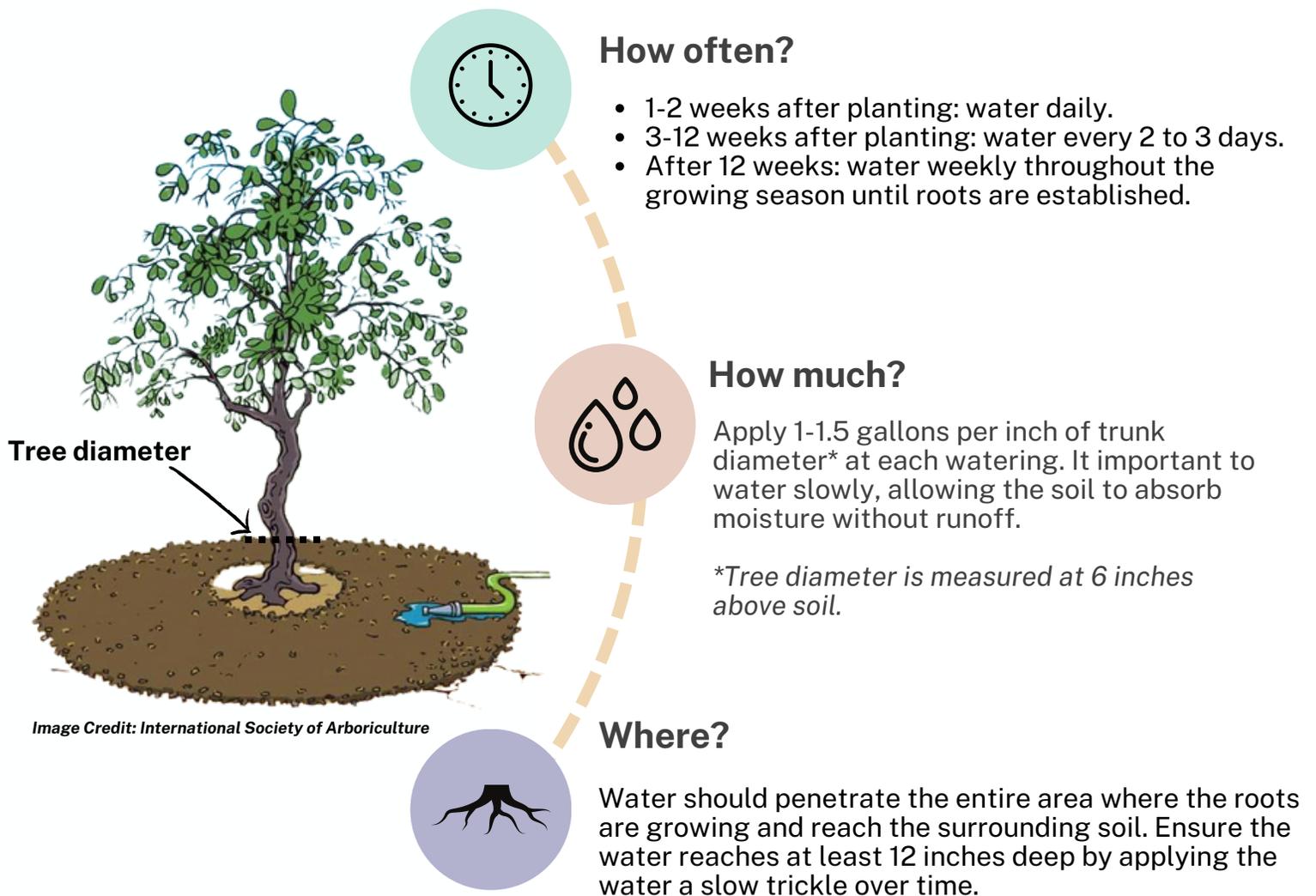
Guidance for watering newly planted trees to ensure survival.

Insufficient water is the leading cause of death for new trees. Newly planted trees and shrubs need regular and consistent watering until root systems establish, typically for the first 2-3 years.

Frequency: The frequency and amount of water needed depends on your soil, tree type, and weather. See the guidelines below. If there is significant rainfall, adjust your watering schedule.

Check soil moisture: Use a screwdriver or soil probe to check the soil beneath the farthest reaches of the tree's branches, at least 6 inches deep. If the soil is dry, add water with a slow soak. If the soil is wet, allow it to dry before adding more water.

Mulch: Mulch around the base of the tree, leaving a gap so that no mulch is touching the trunk. Mulching helps retain soil moisture, suppress weeds, and regulate soil temperature.



Watering Equipment & Tools

DIY
OPTIONS



5 gallon bucket with holes for slow release



Upside down soda bottle

LOW COST
OPTIONS



Tree Gator,[®]
approx. \$20



Tree Diaper,[®]
approx. \$40

LARGER
SCALE
OPTIONS



Small plastic tank (35 gallons), approx. \$150



Large sap tank (330 gallons), approx. \$250



Soaker hose,
approx. \$0.50/foot



Drip irrigation system, approx. \$150

Watering Plan Checklist

Watering trees at a municipal level requires careful planning and coordination to ensure the health and resilience of the urban forest. Use the checklist below to craft your tree watering plan.



Water Source

Determine where you can access a water source.

- Work with municipal leadership, land managers, or property owners for permission.
- Investigate how other plants or planted beds in your community are watered; is there an active Garden Club or Master Gardener group?
- Are there fire hydrants nearby? Perhaps consider working with your water department to secure a hydrant key.



Equipment

In your budget for the planting project, detail which tools or equipment will be needed to water the trees. Consider:

- Hoses and connectors
- Storage, rain barrels or rain catchment systems
- Access to a vehicle/tank
- Tree watering devices



Coordination

Develop a watering schedule that takes into account the seasonal water needs of and the capacity of your project team. Consider:

- Who will coordinate the watering plan? Who will implement it?
- Create a watering route, map, or checklist to support implementation of the plan and track when trees are watered.
- Watch weather (rain counts!)
- Communicate schedule and needs.