

Winterizing Your Trees

The days are growing noticeably shorter and the temperature is falling faster with each passing day. Soon winter will be upon us and our trees will enter into a state of dormancy for several long, cold months.

Making sure our trees are well prepared for this period is a great way to ensure their healthy future. Here is a list of the top 5 things you can do to 'winterize' your tree:

- 1. Prune your tree to address the following concerns:*
 - Remove or correct structural faults.*
 - Remove dead and damaged material - no point giving pests free room and board!*
- 2. Mulch spread around the drip line of the tree in a thin layer (2"-3" at most) will help retain moisture. The tree will use these reserves during dry periods over the winter. You can use any composted organic mulch but be careful of pests hitching a ride.*
- 3. Wrap newly planted trees or any tree that has not yet developed a good protective corky bark. This will help protect the tree against mechanical injuries including chewing and rubbing by animals.*
- 4. Fertilize your trees when there is still some moisture in the ground. This will help build the tree's nutrient stores and help it through the winter. It will also give it a kick start in to flower, bud and leaf development in the early spring.*
- 5. Water your trees if there has been a lack of precipitation throughout the fall months. Trees do not get a lot of moisture in the winter. As a result, they will need to build up a reserve before extreme cold temperatures set in. This is especially true of evergreen trees.*



Following these 5 steps may require a fair bit of work but, in the end, it is well worth the effort! Properly winterizing your trees gives them the best chance of not only surviving a cold and dry winter, but also flourishing with new life the following growth season.

Remember; when in doubt contact your local certified arborist. They can be a big help in making sure that any one of these recommendations are performed correctly.

Good luck to you and your trees!!

