



Build a Canopy. Go Paper-free!

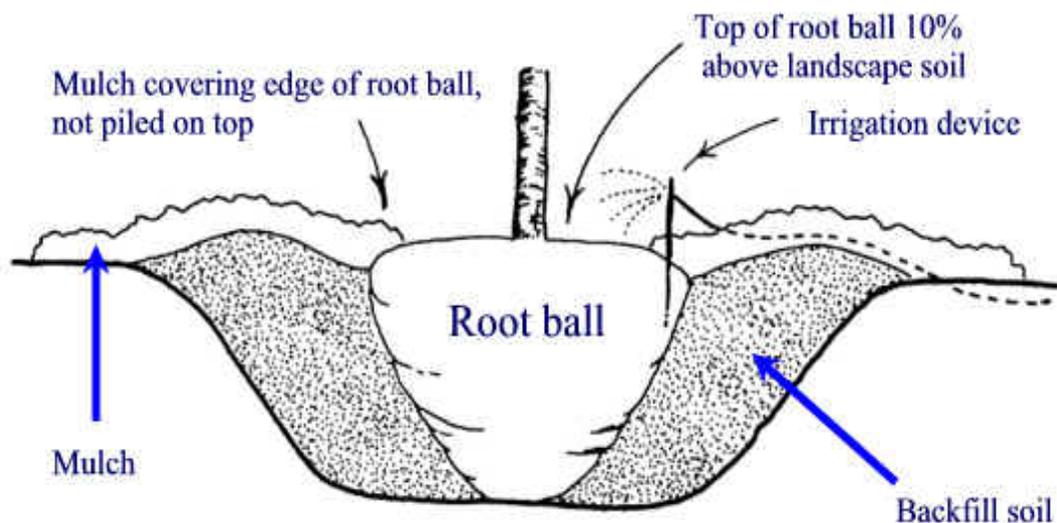
TREE PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Carry your tree carefully.** Always carry your tree by the container and not by the trunk. Lifting it by the trunk could damage the root system.
- 2. Select the proper planting site.** Know what kind of tree you are planting. Give it room to grow. Don't plant a large or medium size tree under or near utility lines or street lights. A good rule of thumb is to envision the tree 10 years from now and locate it as if it was that size now!
- 3. Before you dig, call Sunshine State One Call at 811 or 1 (800) 432-4770 for underground utility line locations.** It takes approximately three days to get the utility line locations marked, but it's worth the wait to avoid damaging your water, cable, electric or telephone lines, and to protect personal safety.
- 4. Prepare the planting hole – Dig out, not down!** Trees die if planted too deep. The rootball should sit about two to three inches high out of the hole. Loosen soil three to five times the diameter of the container. Unless your soil is pure rock, additives, such as peat moss, compost, etc. are not needed. **DO NOT** fertilize at the time of planting. Wait at least three months to fertilize.
- 5. Prepare the tree.** Remove the tree from the container gently. Laying the tree down on its side and squeezing the container a few times will sometimes loosen the pot so that it will slide off.
- 6. Check the rootball for circling roots.** If circling roots are left in place, they will continue to enlarge in that pattern after the tree has been planted. Gently separate the circling roots. Cut exceptionally long roots and guide them outward. If the roots are severely wrapped around the trunk, please contact the City's Urban Forester at (954) 828-5785 for more information. The tiny root tips that absorb water and minerals for the tree die off quickly when exposed to light and air, so do this step quickly.
- 7. Position the tree.** Place the tree in the center of the planting hole with the top of the rootball about two to three inches higher than the surrounding soil surface. Remember – *Planting too deeply can cause a tree to die years after it was planted!*

8. **Backfill.** Fill in the planting hole with the soil from the planting site. Remove any large rocks or other debris as the soil is returned to the planting hole. When the hole is half full, slowly water to saturate the soil and remove air pockets, then continue to fill the hole with soil.
9. **Water thoroughly.** Continue watering to remove air pockets, and secure the soil around the roots. If necessary, build a 6-inch high temporary watering berm using soil or mulch around the edge of the planting hole to keep the water in. When the berm is no longer needed rake the soil or mulch **AWAY** from the tree so that it doesn't bury the rootball.
10. **Mulch around, but not on top of, the rootball of the tree.** Two to three inches of organic mulch should help to retain moisture around the tree. Keep the mulch off the top of the rootball. *Never place mulch against the trunk of the tree* because it may cause it to decay.
11. **Fertilize your tree three to six months after planting.** Use a slow-release fertilizer low in phosphorus such as one formulated for palm trees.

If you have any questions, please contact Gene Dempsey, City Forester, at GDempsey@fortlauderdale.gov or (954) 828-5785.

CROSS SECTION OF A PROPERLY PLANTED TREE



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