

How to Water & Care for Your Newly Planted, KAHNKE BROTHERS Tree

1. Trees should typically be watered 1-2 times per week. During hot, summer weather; newly planted trees should be watered twice a week. During more average conditions, once a week will do it. After the night temperatures drop and leaves begin to fall, you can cut back to watering every other week. Saturating the soil around each tree right before the ground freezes hard in late fall/early winter will do a great deal to prevent winter injury. Watering more frequently than 1-2 times/week can actually slow root growth and can eventually cause the root system to rot. Watering deeply and infrequently stimulates root growth, as roots probe deeper in search of moisture.
2. It takes about 1 inch of rain to saturate the top 6 inches of soil, so it takes a fairly significant rainfall to eliminate the need for hand watering. Irrigation systems are usually set up to provide about 1" of water each week, so manual watering will still be necessary in irrigated environments.
3. Each time you water, you should saturate the entire root zone. If your tree came in a 15-gallon container, it will need about 15 gallons of water, 1-2 times each week. A 2.5" ball and burlap tree will require about 25-30 gallons of water to thoroughly saturate its root system. Turn your water on to a slow flow rate and time how long it takes to fill a 5-gallon bucket. You will need to keep the hose on your 2.5" tree for 5-6 times that long to adequately hydrate it.
4. Be sure not to just "set it and forget it." You will want to reposition your hose a few times to make sure that all portions of the root system receive even moisture.
5. If you need to speed up the watering process, consider investing in some irrigation bags (readily available online by companies such as Tree Gator) or soaker hose rings. These tools will prevent you from having to babysit your trees while you water. They still need to be used regularly in order to work.
6. Mulch. Mulch insulates and protects roots and helps keep soil temperatures more even. Wind and sun will dry out the soil surface much more quickly if you don't use it. Mulch will prevent weeds from growing around your trees and thus, prevent you from injuring them by mowing or weed whipping to close to their trunks. Be sure to run your hand around the trunk of each tree to keep mulch from directly contacting their trunks. Doing so will prevent mold growth.
7. If you choose to fertilize your trees, you should use a slow release product like Osmocote. This product should be applied early in the season as the leaves are unfurling. It is also acceptable to put it down very late in the season, after leaves drop. Never fertilize after July in summer. Trees begin slowing down around that time of year and stimulating growth after that point can lead to winter injury. Try to keep your late season lawn fertilizer applications away from the drip zones of trees for the same reason. Fertilization typically isn't necessary the first year after planting. It takes trees a season or two to root into their new environment and until they do, it will be impossible to know if supplemental feeding is necessary. Slow growth for a year or two after planting is totally normal. Very large trees can take a few years to recover.
8. Apply a white or light colored trunk wrap to all soft-barked trees from November until March. These wraps will prevent rodent damage and sunscald/frost crack injuries. If you have lots of deer in your neighborhood, you may consider leaving the wrap on during the growing season. Just be sure to check it regularly to make sure that it isn't too tight and that no mold is growing on your tree's trunk. Do not use black plastic drain tile as a substitute. Light colored wraps reflect heat away from the trunk, preventing rapid temperature fluctuations that can cause it to split. We recommend using the white, corrugated, rigid plastic wraps because they are reusable and we have found them to work well in the nursery setting.

I was provided with watering and aftercare instructions for my tree _____ Date _____