

# Tree Talk



Late Winter 2009 CONTR

A PARTNERSHIP WORKING TOWARD  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY FORESTS

## Workshops Announced

Two workshops have been planned for late winter. “Selecting the Right Tree” will be held on Friday, February 27. “Smart Irrigation” will be held on Friday, March 20. The morning workshops are designed for anyone who supervises or performs any kind of turf or landscape maintenance activities.

“Selecting the Right Tree” is a topic requested by previous workshop attendees. Matching tree species to the planting location and the desired function is key to preventing future problems. Even if you do not routinely select trees for planting, this workshop may help you understand problems occurring because of tree selection decisions made in the past. A panel of local professionals—including a landscape architect, a retail nursery owner, a landscape contractor, a city forester, and a Master Gardener—will share their favorite tree species picks and have a facilitated discussion of species selection and use. The workshop includes an orientation for a new Tree Selection Guide developed by the WSU Master Gardeners.

“Smart Irrigation” will address a range of topics related to the wise and effective use of water in the landscape. Penny Simonson, WSU Master Gardener Coordinator will cover Seven Basic Principles of Waterwise Landscaping. Part of the morning will be dedicated to a ‘product fair’ where irrigation supply providers will display and demonstrate products available. Special emphasis will be given to demonstrations of a variety of irrigation controllers.

A workshop brochure and registration form is included with this newsletter mailing.

## Tree Planting Depth

By Dave Stephenson, IDL Community Forestry Coordinator

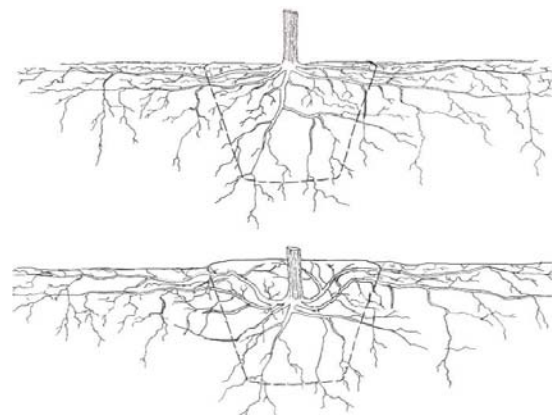
*The following is an excerpt from the Fall 2008 edition of “Idaho Community Trees”, a news bulletin from the University of Idaho, The Idaho Department of Lands–Community Forestry Program, and the Idaho Community Forestry Advisory Council.*

Why is planting depth so critical? First the zone where the trunk becomes roots (zone of rapid taper) needs to have air circulating around it. Burying this area with soil or mulch can lead to a host of problems, including stem decay.

But perhaps even more critical is that the roots, which need oxygen found in the upper areas of soil, will now grow UP and out. This means that roots and trunk are at the same level in the soil (see diagram below). Lateral roots and the trunk can and often do meet at some point in the future as each grows larger, resulting in stem-girdling roots. This constricts the flow of moisture and nutrients in the trunk and causes a weak point at the very base of the tree, making it prone to failure.

There is no more important time in the life of a tree than at planting. When each of us plants a tree, we want and expect it to live long and grow to its mature size. How we plant can make the difference between a tree that lives a few years or many decades. The planting projects I looked at this year around Idaho really look great . . . above the ground. But in order for them to continue to look great decades from now, we **must** change our planting practices. We all need to insist that trees are planted according to the industry and professional standards—ANSI A300 part six (Transplanting) and ANSI Z60.1 (Nursery Stock). Become familiar with these. Inspect the trees above and below ground after planting to ensure these standards are followed. Our investments of time and money are too great to not plant trees so they live long and thrive, adding ongoing value to our cities.

*A comparison of root growth on trees planted with the root flare at grade (top) and with the roots below grade (below). The top configuration results in roots developing in a radial design to give good tree support. Roots that are too deep grow upwards and can cause girdling as both roots and trunk add growth.*



## What's New?

### "Trees are Great for Neighborhoods"

This new tri-fold publication illustrates how trees add to the quality of life in neighborhoods. It also highlights how to help trees survive and thrive: proper planting, protection from turf care equipment, and proper watering.

For copies of this publication, contact us at one of the below telephone numbers, or e-mail us from our web site:

[www.communitycanopy.org](http://www.communitycanopy.org)

### Landscape of Excellence Awards

In 2009 Community Canopy will make its first *Landscape of Excellence* recognition awards. We will be giving public recognition to commercial, retail, church and subdivision 'commons' properties that have done an excellent job of landscaping and tree stewardship.

If you would like to nominate a business, church or subdivision landscape area that has exemplified quality landscaping, please contact your Community Canopy representative.



### Contact Community Canopy at:

Coeur d'Alene 208/769-2266  
Post Falls 208/292-2315  
Hayden 208/772-4411  
Spokane County Conservation  
Dist.-509/535-7274

Web Page: [www.communitycanopy.org](http://www.communitycanopy.org)  
Write: c/o Urban Forestry, City of Cd'A  
710 E. Mullan Avenue  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814



## Upcoming Events

February 27 – Tree Care Workshop "Tree Selection" at Q'emiln Park in Post Falls,  
12201 W. Parkway Drive

March 20 – Tree Care Workshop "Irrigation" at Spokane County Conservation District,  
210 N. Havana, Spokane

### Arbor Day Dates:

April 4 – Post Falls Arbor Day

April 8 – Washington's Arbor Day

April 24–Idaho's Arbor Day (The last Friday in April is also the National Arbor Day date)

## By the Book

Individuals or companies that work on landscapes for a living need to be familiar with the applicable ordinances of the communities in which they work. The following is a quick guide to the cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, Post Falls, and Spokane County.

Many communities have requirements or licensing regarding those who perform services on public trees, which includes trees within the public rights-of-way. In Coeur d'Alene anyone who "prunes, plants, tops or removes" a public tree must be licensed with the city. Licensing assures that tree workers are familiar with provisions of the city's urban forestry ordinance as well as covers liability issues. In order to be licensed, a contractor must have an ISA-Certified Arborist on staff. Post Falls and Hayden do not require licensing, but do require the supervision of an ISA Certified Arborist when cutting, trimming or pruning public trees.

Topping of public trees is prohibited in Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and Hayden. If an abutting property owner wants to reduce the size of a tree through drop-crotch pruning, Coeur d'Alene requires the review and approval of their Urban Forestry Committee.

All public tree removals require city permission in Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and Hayden. In Coeur d'Alene removal requests are reviewed by the Urban Forestry Committee before the required permit can be issued. This process that can take up to a month, so homeowners and tree services need to plan ahead.

Planting of public trees is also regulated to assure that the right tree is put in the right place, and planted correctly. Each Idaho community has an approved tree list, although many of the same trees are on all the lists. Each community requires that only small (or Class I) trees be planted under power lines. Similarly, there are a restricted number of species that can be planted within swales. These swale species are those that best tolerate 'wet feet' and the salts that wash off of roads and parking lots. Approved tree lists can easily be obtained from the cities by request (e-mail, telephone, or stop by City Hall), or check the city web sites. Links to the web sites can be found on the links list at the Community Canopy web site ([www.communitycanopy.org](http://www.communitycanopy.org)).

Hayden, Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and the Spokane County Conservation District have all adopted the Community Canopy tree planting standards as illustrated in the tree planting details for bare root, container, and Balled & Burlapped trees. These details are also available on the Community Canopy web site.

## Call Before You Dig

Another law to be familiar with when doing any excavation, including tree planting, is Call Before You Dig or One Call. Each state has laws regarding requirements to pre-mark your excavation area or spot with white paint, then notify the underground utility locators. These calls are for the safety of workers, as well as to prevent damage to underground utilities. The call must be made two full working days prior to doing the excavation work. You can now call 811 from any telephone and be connected to your state's One Call Center. Or use these local numbers:

Kootenai County: 1-800-428-4950

Spokane County: 1-800-424-5555