

**Your Tree is an Investment Too!
(Springtime Tree Tips!)
By Paul Pondella**



A healthy tree increases in value with age, paying big dividends. It increases your property value, beautifies your surroundings, purifies our air, and saves you energy by providing cooling shade from the summer's heat and protection from the winter's wind.

Are you seeing normal springtime growth? Is your tree a late bloomer? Does it produce minimal fruit? Is it not flowering? There may be several factors involved which may explain why your tree is not functioning well.

If you have had any **construction** done within 25 feet of any tree, your tree could be suffering from **root damage**. The roots of the tree grow outward in their search for nutrients and water. When construction or digging is done near the tree, it is possible for root damage to occur, preventing satisfactory growth and development.

One of the most common problems is **stress**. Yes, trees experience stress just as we do and must have adequate space, heat, light, water, oxygen and proper nutrients in order to grow normally. Without these, the tree will eventually begin "stressing" and could even die! If your tree resides in water-limited or nutrient-limited soil, it may cause the tree to experience stress. Stress leads to root damage which can be very harmful to the tree and could cause extensive damage depending on the severity.

Insect infestation and tree diseases can also threaten tree health. Improper reduction of foliage can leave a tree susceptible to foliage fungus problems. Any abnormality in a tree's appearance requires careful examination of the problem.

Rain and wind can also be surprising harmful to your trees. Severe weather storms can create a hazardous environment for children, pets, your property and even you! Damaged trees damage property!

Below are some key factors to consider in providing a happy and healthy growing environment for your trees:

- ? **FERTILIZATION: Proper fertilization** will ensure that the tree has the right nutrients to stimulate flowering and fruit production. This process puts the right tools within the trees reach so it can produce its own food through photosynthesis. Replenishing soil with fertilizer not only applies minerals to the soil, it also hydrates "drought stress" and promotes new root growth.

- ? **PRUNING: Did the last Santa Ana winds prune your trees? Broken limbs & uprooted trees that damage your property can be very costly!** Removing disproportioned tree limbs will make top-heavy trees lighter which increases air flow and light penetration and decreases damage from heavy winds. Pruning of dead limbs and branches also promotes new growth and allows better sunlight filtration. Pruning off live terminal growth that may be a hazard and threat to the tree's own existence will actually help save it. Leaves of the tree produce food that will nourish new root production and new roots must be initiated and developed for the tree to establish successfully. A well scheduled maintenance pruning program will greatly benefit your tree, giving it a long, healthy life with minimal problems from Mother Nature.

- ? **AERATE & HYDRATE:** Trees struggle year after year trying to sustain themselves in stressful urban settings such as limited root space, soil compaction and mechanical damage. Root-zone injected fertilizer removes plugs of soil and allows roots to spread freely in loosened soils. Water and oxygen is able to penetrate through the soil layers which prevents “pooling” water at one or more levels. This process minimizes “stuck” water that may suffocate roots.

In summary, when you purchase a high-quality tree, plant it correctly and treat it properly. **A properly hydrated, aerated, fertilized and pruned tree** will promote strength and structure allowing many leaves and stems to remain for nourishment. By doing this, you and your tree will benefit greatly in the many years to come. Happy Spring and happy growing!

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