

CONSULTING TREE TIPS

Summer 2020

Facts, findings and timely leads for arboriculture, horticulture, and urban forestry



Bartlett Consulting Tree Tips is our way to keep in touch with you, providing information on the challenges we all face while working and managing our urban environments.

Please contact us with questions, or other subjects that you want to hear more about, via any one of our Bartlett Consulting teams.

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Engineering & Public Works

My Tree Grates are Killing Me!

Did you know that many cities are no longer allowing the installation of tree grates? The primary reason is the liability they create when they fail. But in addition, they are expensive, many times the price of the tree. They also damage and kill trees when they are not maintained. In addition, the small soil pit they are covering may be the only soil volume they have available to grow in. Find great alternatives to tree pits and grates in *Up by Roots* by James Urban, and you can find other resources at www.isa-arbor.com.



Utility lines in a tree pit.

Landscape Architecture

Trees in Pots?

Have you ever wondered why so many urban trees fail or die right after a few good years of growth. In most cases, it has to do with soil volume. Installing potentially large maturing trees in limited soils is like growing house plants too long in a pot. Eventually roots run out of space, unless they might find their way under a sidewalk or curb. Then they get blamed for infrastructure damage. Most cities are moving towards requiring a minimum soil volume of 1,000 cu ft per tree, about a 5'x 10'x 2 foot deep pit. Compare that to a 4'x 4' by 3' deep tree pit with 48 cu ft. in many hardscapes.



This dying maple had limited soil.

Planning & Development

Critical Root Zones



A variety of driplines.

Driplines of tree crowns are not always reflective of their critical root zones (CRZ). Note the driplines pictured. Trunk size, based on 12" radius for every inch diameter radiating from the base of the tree, is a better estimate of the CRZ. Because roots are opportunistic and have different characteristics, no two are alike. Many factors influence their depth and range, including but not limited to species, size, soils, drain-age, slope, physical barriers and more. Get more detailed information on protecting trees in the ISA Managing Trees During Construction BMP and the Trees and Development guide which can both be found at www.isa-arbor.com.

