

Preparing Trees for Winter Checklist

With the coming of fall it is important to remember to prepare your trees for the tough North Dakota winter. The following checklist serves as a reminder of the most important considerations for fall tree care and proper tree winterization.

- Water trees weekly in late fall until freeze-up. Two gallons per inch of stem diameter is recommended, if the soil is dry at a depth of six inches. This will help prevent winter dieback.
- Rake up and remove/destroy fallen leaves. This is the best thing you can do to reduce the amount of fungal leaf disease next year (many fungal leaf diseases overwinter on leaf litter).
- Prune dead wood to decrease overwintering sites for tree diseases and insect pests.
- Wait until the tree is dormant (at least November) to prune living branches, always using proper technique.
- Wrap the lower main stem of trees that have not developed thick bark to protect them from sun scald and rodent feeding damage. Light colored tree guards or other tree wrap products are recommended.
- Wrap burlap around smaller, high-value (landscape) conifers or set up a burlap sun/wind shield to help minimize the chances of winter burn.
- Throughout winter, use caution when applying ice melt products near trees and shrubs. Salts and other chemicals contained in some products may cause harm.

By completing this checklist you will be doing your part to maximize the chances that your trees will make it through the winter in good health and will be ready for a productive growing season.