

Ottiger Tree Service, LLC Spring Tree Care Tips

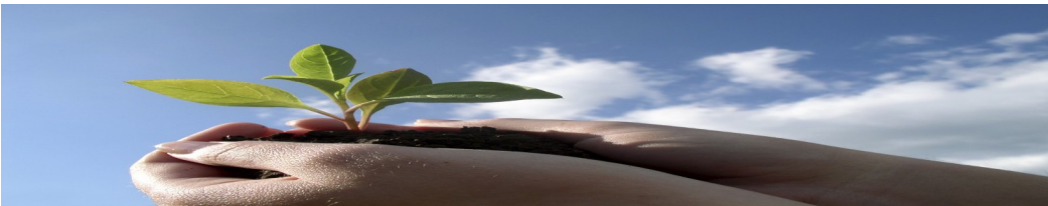


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Volume 2, Issue 1

Proper Tree Planting for Earth Day

Don't Bury Me: A hole dug too deep is a sure way to kill a tree



Earth Day is April 22—

Celebrate the wondrous benefits of trees and make a wise investment by planting a shade tree in your yard! But before you plant, take some advice from the experts to help your new tree live a long time.

"Too often, consumers waste hundreds of dollars on trees that will die because they were planted too deep," cautions Tchukki Andersen, staff arborist with the Tree Care Industry Association.

"Proper planting is absolutely essential in the failure or success of a transplanted tree," says Andersen. "Using quality plants and following up with good tree care practices, such as watering, pruning and fertilizing, will not save a poorly planted tree. The most common mistake is planting the root ball too deep," she says.



Homeowners can purchase trees packaged in three common forms:

1. Bare-Root plants may be sold with the roots tightly packed in a moisture-retaining medium that is wrapped with paper or plastic, or with roots loosely covered by a moist packing medium. Roots must be adequately moistened prior to planting. Roots are spread out evenly in the hole when planting.

2. Balled and Burlapped (B & B) trees are moved with a ball of soil protecting their root system. Soil balls are heavy, so professional arborists who have proper equipment should be hired to plant large trees. Smaller B & B trees should be carried with a hand under the ball. Carrying a B & B tree by the stem or branches can result in serious root damage. When planting, set the root ball in the hole, position the tree, then remove twine and nails. Remove or fold back burlap from the upper third of the root ball.

3. Container-Grown trees have the advantage of a root system that is relatively

undisturbed at planting, but beware of "pot-bound" container trees. Do not buy container trees that have a large amount of roots completely circling the inside of the pot. These trees will take a long time to get established after planting because the roots have difficulty growing beyond the thick ring of circling roots. Immediately before planting container trees, prune the roots. Root pruning can cut up to 50 percent of the roots in container trees but this is still sufficient to permit plant establishment. This compares with pruning about 10 percent or less of the root system being transplanted with B & B trees. Always remove the container prior to planting.

Contact a Professional

See the next page for planting guidelines. You can also contact us. We are professional arborists that can assess your landscape and work with you to determine the best trees to plant. We are members of the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), a public and professional resource on trees and arboriculture since 1938.

Our Mission:

We are dedicated to maintaining the balance between tree health, customer safety & satisfaction, and raising the standards of the arboriculture industry.

Membership Affiliations:

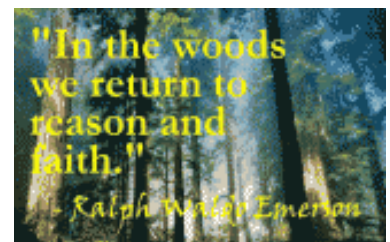
St. Louis Arborist Association
www.stlouisarborists.com

Tree Care Industry Association
www.tcia.org

International Society of Arboriculture
www.isa-arbor.com

Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org

National Arbor Day! April 30th



Send this free e-card from
www.arborday.org

 **Arbor Day Foundation**

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Ottiger Tree Service (OTS) offers tree/brush removal, pruning and dead wooding to the greater St. Louis area.

We are a first-generation, family-owned business, and proud of our reputation as a dependable and quality-oriented arbor care services company.

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OTTIGER TREE SERVICE FEATURED IN TCIA'S NATIONAL PUBLICATION!!

Accreditation Profile

ATTENTION TO DETAIL HELPS OTTIGER TREE STAND OUT

By Janet Aird

Ottiger Tree Service, LLC, a certified arborist, has been working with trees since 1972 and founded his company, Ottiger Tree Service, LLC, in 1998. Nick, who is also a certified arborist as well as a CTSP (Certified Tree-Safety Professional), crew leader and the company's main climber, worked for the company while he was in university and joined full time in 2005.

The company is based in Fenton, Missouri and serves the greater St. Louis area. About half of their work is pruning and half tree removal. They also do tree recovery work after storm damage. "After a storm comes through, anyone with a chain saw comes by and removes the trees that have fallen. After that, you still have trees with broken limbs." And that's where Ottiger comes in, making the cuts to help trees recover. For the company, it's an art as much as a science, because they make sure the final result is pleasing to the eye. It's also a "green" practice, because it can save some trees that might otherwise be lost. This attention to detail is one reason the company stands out from others, says O.J.

The company has six employees, plus O.J. and Nick, full-time, year-round. "We prefer to be small," O.J. says. "If there is so much we do here, and we don't get into laying off employees when there isn't enough work."

The size of the company also benefits their customers, which are about 70 percent residential, Nick adds. "There aren't a lot of different levels to go through," he says. "When a customer calls, they're either talking to my father, myself or my wife, who works in the office. On every call, the answer is going to show up."

Usually they both do.

"Dad just can't help but show up. He does crowd control and I do tree control."

And in fact, many of the people who stop to watch their work become new customers. They get 95 percent of their work through word of mouth.

Their specialty is removing large trees from small spaces, which also requires great attention to detail.

"Here in the St. Louis area, it's pretty close and compact," O.J. says. "You've got five- to 48-inch diameter trees, 70 to 100 feet tall, expanding across three to five backyards."

The company will recommend more appropriately-sized trees for the space, another sustainable practice. It's much healthier for trees to be able to grow to their natural height and width, he says.

"When you start interfering with nature too much, you start to make more problems."

In addition to coordinating with all the affected homeowners and the utility company when they remove trees, they have to bring all the brush down safely. They work around active low-voltage power lines, but get the power company to shut down the high-voltage lines, Nick says. Still, it's almost impossible to walk through some backyards and stay 10 feet away from every energized source, from transmission and cable lines to guide wires and fences.

"Awareness is really the key when working around energized sources. You have to know your limitations. TCIA has sessions for EHAP (Electrical Hazards Awareness Programs), and we've all been through that. My CTSP comes in handy, too. It helps me be more aware of the big picture when I'm in a tree."

Nick became a CTSP—one of only four in the state—as part of his company's com-

The Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) is a public and professional resource on trees and arboriculture since 1938. It has more than 2,000 member companies who recognize stringent safety and performance standards and who are required to carry liability insurance. TCIA has the nation's only Accreditation program that helps consumers find tree care companies that have been inspected and accredited based on: adherence to industry standards for quality and safety; maintenance of trained, professional staff; and dedication to ethics and quality in business practices.

We are one of only five accredited tree care companies in Missouri. We were the second in the state to receive this.

In February's *Tree Care Industry Magazine*, our company was featured. You can read the article in its entirety by visiting our website:

<http://www.ottigertreeservice.com/images/TCImagarticle.pdf>

We continually strive to improve our knowledge and our presence in the marketplace.

If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please send them to us: info@OttigerTreeService.com

We will be starting an "Ask the Arborist" section to tap into our owner, OJ's, 30-plus years of tree knowledge. We like to call him the *Tree Whisperer!* So, please send your questions!!

Andersen advises consumers to follow these planting guidelines:

- Measure the height and diameter of the root ball or root spread.
- Dig the hole 1 to 3 inches shallower than root ball or root depth. The hole's diameter should be 2 to 3 times the diameter of the root ball or root spread.
- Set the tree on undisturbed solid ground in the center of the area. The tree should be planted so that the root flare, the base of the tree trunk where the roots begin to "flare-out," is visible and above grade.
- Backfill with soil from the planting hole, using water to pack or settle the soil around the root ball.
- Mulch the planting area with 2 to 4 inches of an organic mulch such as wood chips. Start the mulch 6 inches away from the tree trunk – do not mulch up to or against the trunk.
- Trees should be pruned after planting to remove broken, damaged, diseased or dead branches.
- Stake and/or protect the trunk of the tree if there is a real potential for wind damage or lawn mower injury. Remove the guy wires when the staking is no longer needed or the tree could be injured or even killed from girdling by the wire.
- Prune to develop a good branch structure once the tree has become established in its new home, usually 1-3 years after planting. Never remove more than 25 percent of total foliage in one year.
- Fertilizing is not recommended at the time of planting.

Information provided by:
www.treecaretips.org

