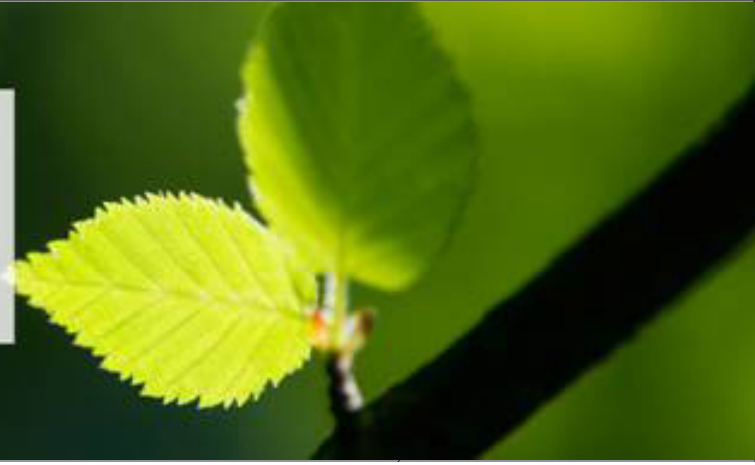


LEAFLET

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ROOTED IN KNOWLEDGE

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Where Are My Roots?



Welcome to the second issue of “The Leaflet”, researched for you by Peter Green, Four Seasons Tree Care’s Tree Health Specialist! Our goal is for each Leaflet to be concise, yet highly informative, as we explore the various tree issues you may encounter here in San Diego.

The Tree: Most of them in the urban landscape

The Problem: Too much soil around the base of the tree trunk

The Treatment: Remove the excess dirt (Sound simple? It is!)

Most trees in the urban landscape were purchased in a pot from a nursery and planted by humans – as opposed to being grown from a seed that was placed randomly by a squirrel, wind or gravity. Most potted trees are transferred to larger pots as they grow, and have more soil added at each repotting. Then finally, when these trees are planted, they have even more soil placed around their base.



Why is this significant? It can negatively affect the health of your trees and the life-span of your investment. For example, excess soil keeps the base of the trunk moist, inhibits oxygen absorption, promotes the growth of adventitious roots from the trunk (these often become circling and girdling roots) and promotes basal decay.

So what can be done? At planting, remove some soil from the pot and make sure to plant at the correct depth. For existing trees with excess soil problems, remove some of the soil to expose the root flare. We recommend doing this with an Air-Spade or Air-Knife, so as not to damage the roots. The Air-Knife directs a high pressure blast of air, which fractures and blows away excess soil while leaving the roots intact (as well as any sprinkler lines or buried utilities!).

With the Air-Knife, we also have the option of blasting a little deeper to make the roots visible for inspection. As arborists, it’s extremely valuable to be able to see the roots of declining trees, as it enables us to decide whether a tree is viable, or beyond saving. We also use our Air-Knife to find problem roots and investigate foundations, as well as to expose sewer, water, gas and utility lines.

If you have any questions about this, or how to best handle other tree health care needs, we’re here to help so please give us a call!

