

# Van Wilgen's

## GUIDE TO WATERING FOR SUCCESS TREES & SHRUBS

Van Wilgen's garden center wants you to be a successful gardener. We want your new trees and shrubs to thrive, not just survive. Water is one of the keys to their successful establishment in your yard. Here are some helpful hints:

**VAN WILGEN'S RULE OF 3 = WATER 3 X's PER WEEK FOR THE FIRST 3 MONTHS!**

### 3 Reasons why the RULE OF 3 is so important:

- Rapid root establishment is crucial in the first 3 months of planting. The goal is to establish balance between the roots and the canopy. Planting/transplanting shock lasts until this balance is restored. In order to do this, the root system needs to grow quickly. Roots grow quickly when watered properly.

\*Add Van Wilgen's Jump Start to really push root growth. It is a root stimulant, high in Phosphorus and B vitamins that will significantly speed up root establishment.

- Most root failure occurs in the first 3 months due to improper watering.
- A water stressed plant in the first 3 months is vulnerable to decline, disease and insect attack in the future.

### 3 methods of successful watering:

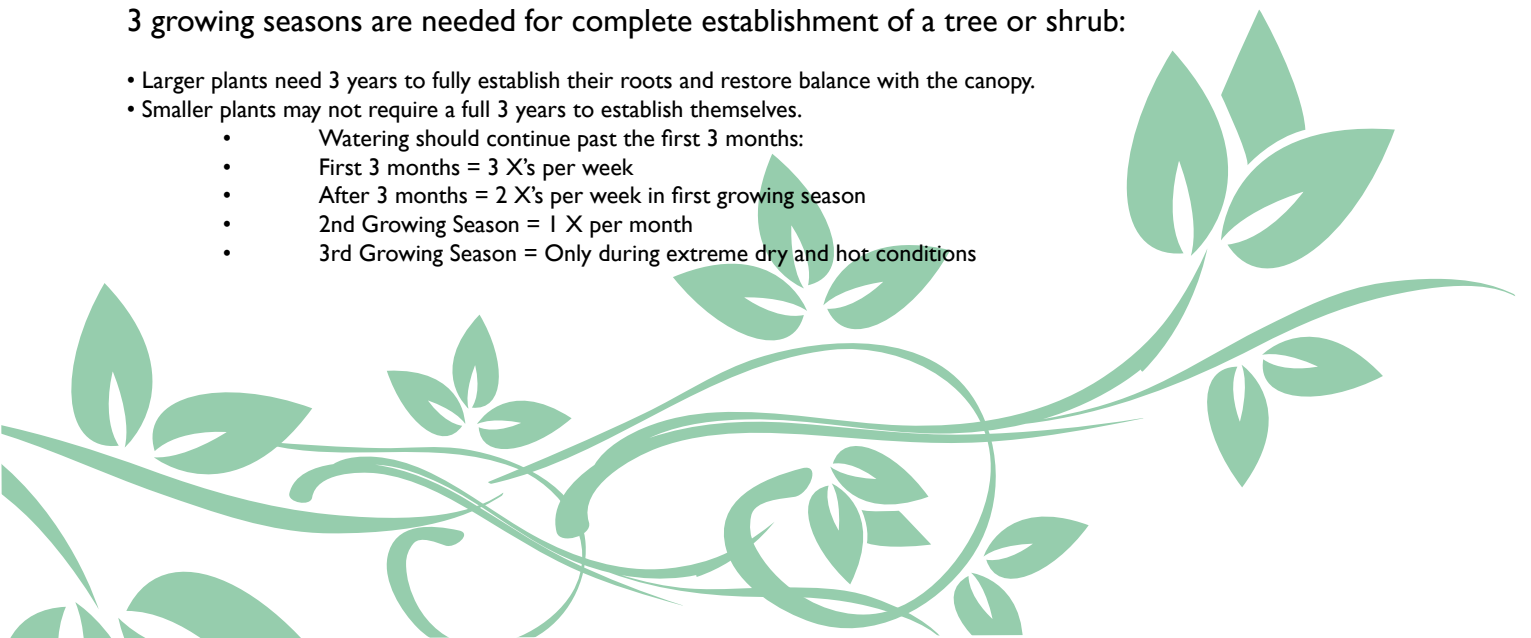
- By hand:
- Small trees & shrubs: Build a soil ring/basin at the drip line of shrub. Fill the basin 2 to 3X's, 20 to 30 minutes at a time.
- Larger trees & shrubs: Apply a slow trickle of water for 45 minutes around the drip line of the plant.
- At the base of the plant: Avoid overhead watering. Most plants absorb water through the root system as opposed to the foliage. Overhead watering can also lead to disease.
- Slow & steady wins the race: Avoid high water pressure. It may wash away fresh soil or mulch and expose roots to air.

### 3 tools for proper watering:

- Hose: Set hose at the base of the plant at a slow trickle with a soft stream.
- Soaker Hose: Set it around the base of the plant half way between trunk and drip-line. It releases a nice slow drip so water moves deep into the soil.
- Moisture check: Use your finger to test at least 2 to 3 inches into the soil at the base of the plant. If it is dry, you need to water. If it feels moist, your plant is good for the day.

### 3 growing seasons are needed for complete establishment of a tree or shrub:

- Larger plants need 3 years to fully establish their roots and restore balance with the canopy.
- Smaller plants may not require a full 3 years to establish themselves.
  - Watering should continue past the first 3 months:
  - First 3 months = 3 X's per week
  - After 3 months = 2 X's per week in first growing season
  - 2nd Growing Season = 1 X per month
  - 3rd Growing Season = Only during extreme dry and hot conditions



### 3 important location questions:

- Is your soil well-draining or compact?
- If your soil is well-draining you may need to water longer than the homeowner with compacted soil. If your soil is sandy (too well-draining) water will flow right through before the root system can absorb it. Be sure to give your plants extra water in this case.
- If your soil is compacted, be careful not to overwater your plants. Compact soil tends to hold the water in puddles. This can deprive the plant's root system of much needed oxygen.
- Is the location shady or sunny?
- This is an easy one. If your plant is in the shade it will not need as much water as a plant in the full sun.
- Do you have mulch or no mulch?
- A mulched plant can hold more moisture than a non-mulched plant. Keep this in mind when you are watering.

### 3 signs of plant stress due to improper watering:

- Leaves: They may wilt, yellow or drop.
- Growth: Plants may be stunted and have poor bud formation.
- Insect & Disease: Plants may be attacked by insects and/or diseases. A weak plant is vulnerable to attack.

\*The above plant stresses may occur if a plant has been under-watered or over-watered. A stressed plant may show the same symptoms regardless of the watering issue.

Van Wilgen's wants you to be successful gardeners.  
It is important to us that you enjoy your trees and shrubs for many years to come.

**HAPPY GARDENING & PROPER WATERING!**

