



# TREEmendous News

TreeMasters, Inc.

Fall, 2008

## Fall & Winter Tree-care

### **Why is fertilization in the Fall so important?**

Fall fertilization benefits the tree by providing nutrients when the roots are most active. This encourages root growth, even when the tree appears "dormant", and helps the tree to resume growth in the spring. Nutrients are used immediately and stored for uptake in the spring.

### **What happens to trees if you don't fertilize them?**

Since most trees are in lawns, their tree root zones lack organic matter, because people remove leaves and fallen limbs which nature would recycle. Soil compaction and competition with grass guarantees poorer conditions for root growth. It has been demonstrated that a tree's roots are about 5 times more dense under mulch than under grass. Homeowners desire turf, but to mulch the entire root zone of their trees is impractical. The alternative is routine fertilization with humates. Without fertilization, many urban trees become more susceptible to problems and are predisposed to injury.

### **Why is Winter the best time to prune my trees and shrubs?**

With the absence of leaves, the structure of the tree can more easily be seen, allowing us to quickly tell where to make the pruning cuts. An arborist can also readily identify tree defects such as dead and broken limbs, cracks, crossing/rubbing branches, etc. Also, pathogens or insects are rarely an issue with pruning cuts. If there is any concern of infection however, pruning during winter can assure that an infection does not occur.



### **What should I do if I have trees that need to be removed?**

Winter removals should be scheduled early to make sure the site is prepped for early spring replanting. TreeMasters is a managing partner in the Oaks at 300 S. The "Oaks" is our source for large trees including red oaks, white oaks, tulip trees, and others. Many of the oaks are as large as 8" diameter and up to forty feet tall, and at a very reasonable cost.



*creating better futures*

## **The Value of Trees**

"The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day."—*U.S. Dept. of Agriculture*

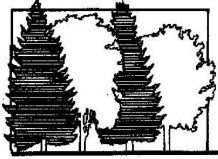
"1 acre of forest absorbs 6 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and puts out 4 tons of O<sub>2</sub>. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people."—*U.S. Dept. of Agriculture*

"If you plant a tree today on the west side of your home, in 5 years your energy bills should be 3% less. In 15 years the savings will be nearly 12%."—*Center for Urban Forest Research*

"A mature tree can often have an appraised value of between \$1,000 and \$10,000."—*Council of Tree & Landscape Appraisers*

"Healthy, mature trees add an average of 10 percent to a property's value."—*USDA Forest Service*

*Proper care will insure decades of value for landscape trees.*



# TreeMasters, Inc.

*making a better future for your trees... and the environment*

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**We have MOVED!**  
**Please be sure to note our**  
**new phone number!**

The heat and drought of this summer does more than create discomfort for us. It is brutal on our trees. Many trees have been damaged by the lack of water, but we can't see the effects until 2009.

One symptom of drought stress is the premature loss of leaves. If your trees have lost leaves in the summer, or have thinner canopies, it is an indication of trouble to come.

Drought-stressed trees become susceptible to root rots, which will cause further decline and can produce a dangerous tree. Many insects which compromise trees attack drought-stressed trees.

Fort Wayne soils are mostly heavy clay. When the ground has cracks, the soil is so dry and hard, roots cannot grow. In the lakes area, the sandy soils dry out easily and as water tables drop, trees are left high and dry for weeks!

Trees either grow or die; there is no static state. The weather of 2008 has placed hundreds of thousands of trees in a negative condition. Pro-active care is the only solution for trees valued in the landscape.

The **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** is a recently introduced exotic pest of ash trees. Most likely, it arrived on untreated wood packaging imported from China. Since 2002, it has spread throughout the US, killing millions of Ash.

Adult EAB beetles lay eggs on ash trees. When the eggs hatch, the larvae bore into the layer of tissue just underneath the bark of the tree. The tunnels created by the larvae kill that tissue which causes the tree to decline in health. A declining Ash is more attractive to other Emerald Ash Borers and the tree will continue to be attacked the following years until the tree dies, usually within 1-3 years.

**All true Ash trees (*Fraxinus* sp.) are at risk.** In areas where EAB has become established, the weaker ash trees are always the first to be attacked. This is why tree health is so important. A declining tree is the most susceptible however, in a heavily infested area all ash trees will be killed if left untreated. In the last 6 years in Detroit there have been millions of trees killed. In many areas there are large numbers of standing dead trees that are becoming hazardous due to falling limbs.

**The good news is that individual trees can be protected.** It is up to you, the landowner, to have your high value trees protected. This annual treatment is applied (usually in the spring) to the soil near the base of the tree and is environmentally benign. The tree absorbs the product from the soil and it spreads throughout the canopy of the tree and lasts for the entire season. When the EAB begins to feed on the tree, it ingests the product and is killed.

It is up to the owner to decide whether the tree is worth the annual cost of treatment. If the Ash tree is small and/or there are other trees that occupy the same space, you should consider removal and replacement with a different type of tree. If you have questions about your Ash, you should call us!