

## How you can help young trees?

- Pour two or three buckets of non-potable water around the base of a young tree once a week
- Maintain a water holding basin around the tree with soil at least 10-15 cm high around the drip line to contain water



- Break up compacted surface soil with a fork or other implement around the base of a tree. This helps water soak deep into the soil.



## How you can help older trees?

- Apply as much non-potable water as you can slowly and evenly on the ground around the tree to reduce runoff
- Concentrate the application beneath the tree canopy (within the drip line)



- Core areas under the canopy with a corer to increase infiltration.



## General advice

- Water only when required and within water restrictions
- Avoid watering during day time, or if rainfall is 25 mm or more in a week
- If possible use non-potable water from sources such as the bath and shower, washing machine rinse cycle or the sink
- Only carry as much water as you can manage
- Don't disturb the soil surface extensively underneath the tree canopy as this will damage tree roots
- Mulch spread over the area underneath the canopy of a tree can help retain soil moisture
- Don't park vehicles under trees as this compacts the soil and reduces water infiltration.

'give a tree a drink'



## WATERING OUR PUBLIC TREES

Take an active role in watering street trees in your neighbourhood

For more information on Canberra's public trees, call Canberra Connect on 13 22 81 or visit [www.tams.act.gov.au](http://www.tams.act.gov.au)

Find out about the species in your street in *Trees and Shrubs of Canberra* by Pryor and Banks 2001.



## Minister for Territory and Municipal Services John Hargreaves MLA, on Canberra's Trees

"We all take pride in the natural beauty of our city and of living in the bush capital. However, we face a significant challenge in maintaining this beauty as our street trees are under threat from the drought. Unfortunately, over the last five years, more than 15,000 of our street trees have died and many are still suffering from drought. Our Government is doing the best we can to make sure we water young trees but with over 625,000 trees, we can't water them all. I urge you to help us keep our city beautiful for now and for future generations. Please help us to give a tree a drink."

*There is no need to wait.*

*Start watering your street tree today!*

The health of our street trees—an important landscape feature for which Canberra is renowned—is under threat from the dry conditions currently prevailing in Canberra.

ACT Government contractors water young trees each summer to help keep them alive, but the task is huge, with many thousands of trees in need of watering.

Water is essential to a tree's survival. You can help our trees survive the dry conditions by watering the trees outside your home at least once a week.

## What about water restrictions?

The watering of our public trees is a voluntary campaign. Anyone who wishes to take part in the watering of public trees should do so by using non-potable water where possible and within current water restrictions.

## Six reasons why you should help Canberra's street trees

- Trees can increase the market value of your home
- Trees reduce our energy bills through their cooling shade in summer and their wind reduction in winter
- Trees increase our quality of life by beautifying our surroundings and bringing birds and other wildlife into our urban environment
- Trees purify the air we breathe by releasing oxygen into the air and filtering pollution
- Trees reduce stormwater runoff and erosion
- Trees are the centrepiece of *The Canberra Plan's* strategic theme "Living with the Environment—Our Bush Capital."

## When are the trees most vulnerable?

Trees are vulnerable to drought stresses just like other plants. However, during periods of prolonged dry weather like we have experienced during the past five years, all trees have become vulnerable. This is because soil has become dry even deep into the soil layer where trees get their water.

## How do you know if your street tree is in trouble?

What to look for...

- Dead branches in the canopy
- Sparse leaf cover
- Curling, browning or drooping leaves
- Earlier than normal autumn colours
- Deep bark cracking.

Please remember that trees need watering long before these symptoms are visible.

Many young trees planted on naturestrips, particularly in Canberra's newer suburbs, are at risk of dying, while the health of some of the older and more established trees is likely to be affected during dry periods.



*The urban forest of O'Connor comprised of street trees*

