**How to plant a tree**

**Utility Locate** – JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators)

A locate must be requested at least 48 prior to digging.

**Digging**

* Once you have established the area is free of any utilities, dig a broad, shallow hole at least 2-3 times wider than the root ball

**Examine the tree**

* Find the root flare of the tree (the area at the base of the trunk where it flares slightly before meeting the root system)
* Make sure the root flare is partially visible after planting.
* This step ensures that the tree is not planted too deep. If a tree is planted too deep it can deprive the roots of oxygen and eventually cause the tree to die.

**Placing the tree**

* Again place the tree in the hole so that its root flare is even with or slightly above the soil surface.
* Cut burlap, rope and wire baskets away from the top third of the root ball.
* Straighten the tree and back fill around the base of the root ball.
* Firmly pack the soil around the base of the root ball to steady the tree.
* Check again that the tree is straight.
* Continue backfilling the hole and firmly pack the soil after every few inches of soil added.
* Backfill and pack until the soil level is even with the surrounding soil.
* Water the tree in.

**Stake tree if necessary**

* It is best to leave the tree un-staked if possible.
* Un-staked trees establish more quickly and develop a stronger trunk

**Mulch at the base of the tree**

* Mulch helps to hold in moisture, moderate soil temperature extremes, reduce grass and weed competition, help avoid mower and trimmer damage
* 2-4 inches of mulch should be placed in a saucer like pattern around the tree. Keep mulch 1-2 inches away from the trunk.

**Water** once a week if it does not rain.

**Pruning young trees**

* Pruning is essential for developing a tree with strong structure and form
* Maintain a strong dominant leader and scaffold branches