

Meet Your Local Master Gardeners

Loudoun County Master Gardeners are committed to providing you with information on safe, effective and sustainable landscape management practices that build beautiful and healthy gardens and communities.

Drawing on the horticultural research and experience of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, Master Gardeners are able to diagnose plant, soil, insect and disease problems and make recommendations.

Committed to an environmentally sound Loudoun County and its watersheds, we can also help in the safe use of pesticides and fertilizers to protect the county's water quality and ecosystem.

Give us a call, drop us an e-mail or come by the Extension Office. We're your neighbors and we're here to serve you.



Contact Information

Extension Master Gardener Help Desk

(703) 771-5150

Hours: 9 am-noon,

Monday through Friday

e-mail: loudounmg@vt.edu

Master Gardener Web Site

www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org

Virginia Cooperative Extension Office Address

750 Miller Dr., SE, Ste. F-3

PO Box 7000

Leesburg, VA 20177-7000



Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

www.ext.vt.edu

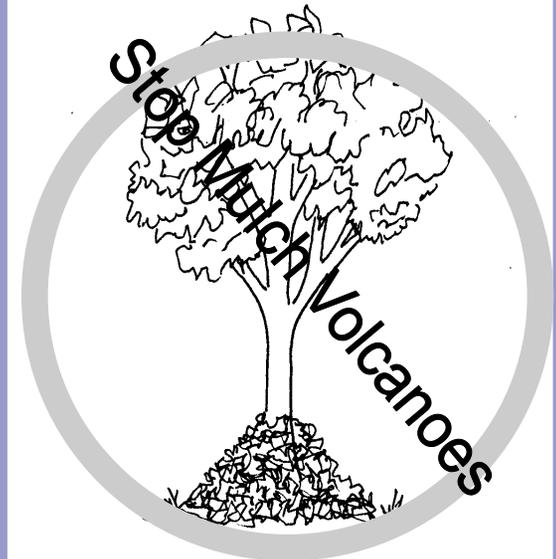
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Master
Gardeners
Serving
Loudoun County

Proper Mulching



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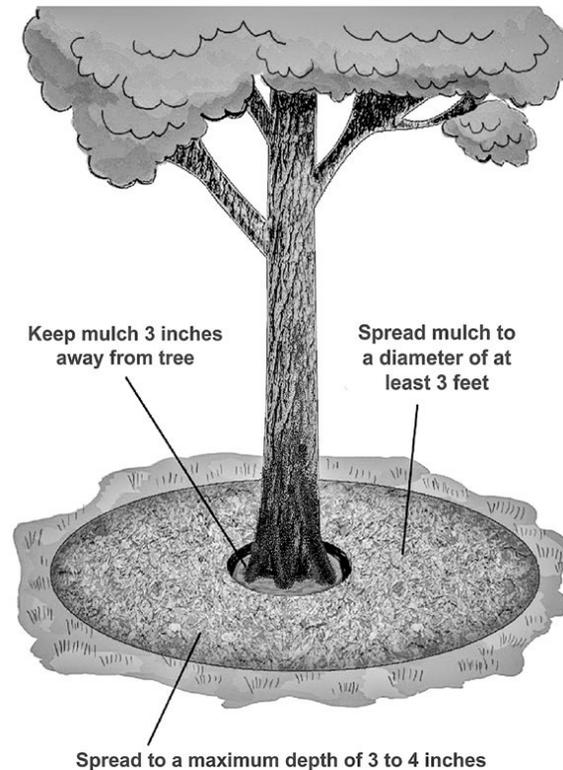
Benefits of Mulch

- Conserves soil moisture, allowing you to water less often
- Keeps down weeds
- Reduces erosion
- Keeps plant roots cool
- Reduces soil compaction
- Provides winter protection
- Simplifies lawn mowing around trees and shrubs
- Makes your yard more attractive

Improper Mulching Impacts

- Mulch volcanoes or over-mulching trees at the trunk can suffocate roots, cause inner bark death, provide a haven for chewing rodents and create a waterproof layer.
- Mulch spread *under* 2 inches deep will not hold moisture, reduce erosion, etc.
- Mulch piled too close to base of any plant will keep the tissue too wet, and sets up an environment for insect and diseases to move into the stem or trunk of the covered plant.

STOP KILLING TREES MULCH 3-3-3



Proper Tree Mulching

- Make sure mulch is at least 3 inches away from base of tree trunk. You should see the flare at the base of the tree.
- Mulch should be 3 inches deep out to the edge of the drip line—do not over-mulch.
- Refresh mulch every 2 years as necessary.

When to Mulch

- Flower beds and vegetable gardens are usually mulched in mid-spring. For best results weed prior to application. Mulch should be 3 inches deep and kept away from stems.
- It is not necessary to refresh every year unless bald spots appear, weeds start to thrive or it has decomposed to under 3 inches. You can rake old mulch to revive the look.
- Winter mulch is applied to help insulate from harsh winter temperatures and frost heaving of the ground. It can be applied in late fall to gardens.

Types of Mulch

Use mulches that are suitable for your plants and landscaping:

- Organic: bark, wood chips, pine straw, lawn clippings, leaf, etc.
- Inorganic: gravel, stone, etc.

For more information:

See the VCE VT Publication at
<http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-724/426-724.html>