

FAQs

1. Will ball moss kill the tree?

In most cases the answer is no. Ball moss needs to be removed only when the tree is heavily covered to the extent that the plants are covering the exterior of the canopy.

Ball moss is a small epiphyte commonly found clinging to trees, fences, utility lines, etc, typically on shaded areas. It's an aerial plant that attaches itself with pseudo-roots that don't absorb water and minerals. Sometimes, tree branches with ball moss seem to be dying, but it's not from the ball moss, but from the canopy shade.

More details at:

http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/City_Arborist/Ball_Moss.pdf

2. How do I water a large prominent tree?

Large trees with a diameter larger than 16 inches need to be watered deeply ~~and~~ during periods of insufficient rainfall (when soils have received less than 1 inch of rain per month). Start by applying 10 gallons of water per inch of trunk diameter, slowly and evenly distributed to the outer half of the dripline (area under the tree's canopy) at minimum, and to the full dripline if feasible. Fine tune until you verify (by gently inserting a small hand trowel or screwdriver somewhere at the outer half of the dripline) that the top 6 inches of soil are moist.

Watering guidelines at:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/growgreen/TreeCare.pdf>

3. Can prominent trees be watered with the City's Water restrictions?

Yes, the City recognizes the importance of preserving prominent trees due to the significant benefits they provide. Please check the city guidelines for restrictions.

Water restrictions at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/stage-2-watering-restrictions>

4. How do I mulch a large prominent tree?

Use organic mulch only, spread it 2-3 inches deep, over as much of the dripline as possible (it's better to mulch the full dripline) and keep mulch 3-5 inches away from trunk. Make sure that mulch is not spread thicker than 3 inches because mulch absorbs water and prevents it from reaching the tree roots. If you have grass under part of the canopy and don't want to remove it, apply on that area 0.5 inches of organic compost yearly instead of mulch.

Demonstration video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLdbdQ9fVZE>

5. Where do I find information about Oak Wilt?

At this link: <https://austintexas.gov/page/oak-wilt-suppression>

6. Will I have to pay anything if I nominate a prominent tree?

No, the goal of this program is for the City to provide the funds and provide the appropriate tree care. However, if the tree that you nominated is chosen, it may be necessary that you provide supplemental watering-

7. Can I nominate my own prominent tree that needs care?

Only private trees within 15 ft. from public property-are eligible for this program. We encourage you to care for your prominent tree as these are the workhorses of the urban forest (e.g. clean air, provide shade, hold soil in place, improve our quality of life). If the tree doesn't qualify for this program, please see the attached links to assist you to locate a private arborist:

Why hire an arborist: <http://www.treesaregood.com/faq/faq03.aspx>

International Society of Arboriculture: <http://www.isa-arbor.com/findArborist/findarborist.aspx>

American Society of Consulting Arborists: <http://www.asca-consultants.org/>