



**Fredericksburg Department of Public Works**  
**Mulch Standards Fact Sheet**  
(In accordance with ANSI A-300 Tree Standards)

**Mulch: Mulch must not exceed 3 inches in depth and must be a minimum of 4 feet diameter around the base of trees.** Too much mulch can be deadly to trees. Thick blankets of mulch prevent air and water from reaching roots, resulting in reduced vigor or tree mortality over time.

**Edging: Edging must not exceed 1 inch depth around mulch beds.** Edging around mulch beds cuts the small feeder roots and damages the ability of trees to grow and thrive.

**Soil: After planting, do not add any extra soil on top of root balls or tree roots.** Even one inch of soil added on top of the roots can impair a tree's ability to grow and thrive.

**Newly Planted Trees**

1. Mulch **must not exceed 3 inches in depth** at any point around the base of trees and must be totally flat, not mounded.
2. Mulch must not come into contact with tree trunks and must be a minimum of 3 inches away from base of trunks.
3. The minimum mulch ring diameter must be 4 feet, and optimally should extend out to the drip line for larger trees.
4. "Virginia Fines" mulch is recommended material. Avoid shredded hardwood mulch.
5. Soil must not be placed on top of existing tree root ball area.

**Maintenance of Trees:**

1. **The total depth of existing and new mulch must not exceed 3 inches in depth total around trees.**
2. Edging must not be deeper than 1 inch around mulch beds.
3. To refresh the appearance of the mulch, options are:
  - a. Rake mulch slightly to give it a fresh look;
  - b. Add a light dressing of new mulch on top of the old.
  - c. Expand old mulch bed further from trees, out to the drip line on larger trees.
  - d. Remove old mulch and replace it with new (total depth not to exceed 3 inches).
4. "Virginia Fines" mulch is recommended, not shredded hardwood mulch.

**Good Mulching**



**Bad Mulching**

