



Vertical Mulching

Vertical mulching is almost always very beneficial to trees of all ages. Vertical mulching increases water and air infiltration to the tree root zone.

Vertical mulching can be accomplished by using an auger with a 1 ½ -2" bit and drilling holes roughly 16 – 18" apart in a grid pattern approximately 18" deep. Always locate and avoid underground utilities and other obstacles before digging. Use caution to avoid remaining portions of the wire basket and underground obstacles.

Drill the holes out to (or beyond if possible) the drip line of the tree. Start the process a safe distance from the trunk and underground utilities. Keep the bit away from any large diameter roots. Fill the holes with the following mixture:

- Pea gravel (gravel will not break down and thus will provide longer benefit)
- Fertilizer, Lime, etc. based on soil and tissue analysis

Trees should be watered thoroughly immediately before and after vertical mulching is completed.





Vertical Mulching

Alps Shopping Center - Athens, GA - Hightower Willow Oaks performing poorly due to soil pH challenges from excess liming. Vertical mulching in June 2006 significantly improves tree health and vigor by June 2007.



June 2006 - 4 inch trunk diameter -
Before vertical mulching



June 2007 - 4 1/2 inch trunk diameter -
1 year after vertical mulching



July 2009 - 6 1/2 inch trunk diameter -
3 years after vertical mulching



Vertical Mulching

Peachtree Rd - Buckhead, GA - Hightower Willow Oaks performing poorly due to improper planting & soil moisture challenges. Vertical mulching in June 2008 significantly improves tree health and vigor by June 2011.



June 2008 - 6.5 inch trunk diameter -
Before vertical mulching



June 2011 - 9 inch trunk diameter -
3 years after vertical mulching



July 2012 - 10.5 inch trunk diameter -
4 years after vertical mulching