

## Trees Falling and Grass Water

By: Melinda Sperl

Make you wonder what these two items have in common? If you have your irrigation system running too often you may be causing your tree roots to come to the surface which can be a hazardous situation for any homeowner. Unstable trees could eventually fall over during high winds and storms. Irrigation systems in our lawns is a main culprit as even though you may be watering your yard, shallow grass watering may be doing real harm to your trees.

Irrigation systems with grass lawns only need a few inches of water for the grass as it has a very short root system. While the grass is really pretty and green, that is not nearly enough water for your trees. Properly watered grass will be watered only 3x's per week which will encourage deeper rooted grass that will survive much better during a drought. This became evident last year when so many lawns died during the drought. Those lawns that were used to deep root watering, or only getting water a couple of times per week, survived the drought. Those that were used to daily watering really struggled during the drought, even those with irrigation systems.

In turn, this also causes the trees to send roots to the surface to search for water when they normally would dig deep for well water. This causes the roots of the trees to be near the surface. Trees need deep tap roots that grow well into the earth which is what is use to keep the tree steady during the heaviest winds.

Even with an irrigation system, it is recommended that trees get extra watering during the heat of summer from an irrigation bubbler or water hose. We lost too many trees in Houston last year; let's try to save some now.

Happy Gardening!

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