



# NEWS AS IT HAPPENS



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## Special Issue: Fall Fertilization of Trees

With cooler temperatures and falling leaves set to make their annual appearances, now is the time to give serious thought to the fall fertilization needs of your trees.

Though their leaves may be turning brilliant colors and dropping, trees' roots are still active, and will benefit greatly from a late autumn application of fertilizer. Roots typically grow during the cooler, moist conditions that come with late fall and early spring, and fertilizers can help to encourage such important growth.

*During the late fall, vegetative growth has ceased, soils are still warm enough for significant root growth to occur, carbohydrate supplies are at their highest, daytime high temperatures are moderating, and moisture is usually not a growth-limiting factor.*

*It is important not to fertilize trees and shrubs too early in the fall. Make sure you wait until the leaves have begun to change color and drop. Applying fertilizers (or pruning branches) earlier may have adverse effects on the trees' dormancy process, and stimulate new late-season growth, which is extremely susceptible to winter damage and death.*

Such new growth may not have time to harden off sufficiently to survive sudden drops to below freezing. Ice crystals rupture cell walls, and the subsequent damage will show up as dead branch tips and branches.

*Another important benefit of fall fertilization is that it will encourage early*

*shoot growth in the spring. Spring growth depends almost entirely upon nitrogen that was absorbed prior to the onset of the winter months. And because nitrogen must be in the root zone for approximately one month before affecting growth, late autumn applications of slow release nitrogen fit the bill perfectly.*

As fall approaches, it is also critical to make sure your trees are in good health. Plants that are diseased or deficient in nutrients are more susceptible to winter injury and stresses than those that are strong and healthy. Fall applications of chelated micronutrients like manganese or iron will reap benefits in the early spring.

So, what do trees need most to prepare them for the winter months? They need higher amounts of phosphorus and potassium in order to store critical carbohydrates for the long, cold winter. They also require slow release nitrogen, which will become available when they need it in the spring.

Growth Products Autumn Care (6-12-12) liquid fertilizer with 40% slow release nitrogen provides SRN for excellent residual release without stimulating new late season top growth. It remains in the soil for spring uptake. The potassium and phosphorus are safe, have a low salt index, and are from a no-chloride source.

Organic Iron 5% is an organic chelate from a glucoheptonate (sugar acid)

chelating agent. This solution provides iron along with a carbon molecule, which helps increase critical carbohydrate reserves.

Manganese Chelate 5% Natural Organic Chelate with 2% Sulfur is in a soluble form that makes for easy plant uptake and use. Manganese Chelate 5% will remain available for plant uptake since it remains as a negative charged ion (that is not attracted to negatively charged soil particles).

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