

Please Don't Overmulch the Township's (and your) Trees!

Montgomery's Shade Tree Committee needs your help.

We often notice excessive mulch piled up against the trunks of the trees the Township has planted in the right-of-way between the street and the sidewalk.

How to Mulch Mulch should not be touching the trunks of trees. Nor should it be piled up like the cone of a volcano. There should be about 6" of space between the trunk and where the mulch starts. Mulch should not be thicker than 2-4". Shredded bark, aged wood chips, and composted leaves are the best mulches. Do not use fresh grass clippings, sawdust, or rocks.

Mulching is not for aesthetics Mulch is essential only for newly planted and very young trees: it helps to keep the soil moist (and the weeds down) while the trees are growing and developing their root systems. Mature and established trees need not be mulched.

Mulch touching the trunks of trees damages (or even kills) them by:

1. Causing rot and decay from continuous moisture up against the bark of the tree
2. Providing a habitat for rodents and insects to damage the bark
3. Encouraging surface roots to grow, which can impact sidewalks

So, please do not put mulch volcanoes against the trunks of the Township's trees (or your own!). Unfortunately, many professional landscapers do not know the correct way to mulch. Landscapers work for you; please tell them how to mulch properly!

This is not just the advice of Montgomery Shade Tree Committee.

NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry has published a pamphlet on the same subject: .

<https://www.montgomerynj.gov/media/1391>

More information about proper mulching:

<https://www.montgomerynj.gov/media/1281>

Contact Shade Tree Committee:

shadetree@montgomerynj.gov

The Shade Tree Committee is charged with planting, care and preservation of public trees on Montgomery streets and in its Arboretum, parks and public areas. The Committee gives advice to residents and officials about planting, care and preservation of trees. It advises the Township on matters relating to tree policy, including review of development applications. The Committee works with the Parks Department, Montgomery's schools, scouts, local businesses, and other Township committees on many environmental and education projects, such as its annual Arbor Day program for 3rd graders. We even perform some tree pruning, invasives removal and weeding. Come to our meetings or join the Shade Tree Committee!