Finding More Information...

For current resources about urban soils, please visit arborday.org/bulletin. This is the official website of the Arbor Day Foundation and includes not only more helpful materials related to Tree City USA Bulletin 5, but also additional tips on tree care, how to purchase trees online, and an online tree guide. The guide offers detailed information about dozens of commonly planted landscape trees that grow throughout the United States, including their soil requirements.

The government organization most closely related to soils is the Natural Resources Conservation Service, once known as the Soil Conservation Service. To visit this website and go directly to the soils section, use: http://soils.usda.gov.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR STATE SOIL?

You have heard of state flowers, state trees and state birds, but do you realize you have a state soil?

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, each state in the United States has selected a state soil and almost half of the states have officially designated an “official state soil” by legislation. The selected soil has a particular significance and shows what great variation there is from place to place. To find your state soil, first visit the Natural Resources Conservation Service website at http://soils.usda.gov and type “state soils” in the local search box. You will find a links to state soil guides. For example, the state soil selected for Oregon is the Drano soil. You can also find the official state soil designations for all states at http://soils.usda.gov/soils/soil笊l.html.

Tree City USA Bulletin ORDER FORM

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For a complete list of Tree City USA Bulletins, visit arborday.org

1. How to Prune Young Trees
2. When a Storm Strikes
3. Solving Tree-Sidewalk Conflicts
4. The Right Tree for the Right Place
5. Living with Urban Soils

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THE TREE CITY USA PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY THE Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters. To achieve the national recognition of being named a Tree City USA, a town or city must meet four standards:

Standard 1: A Tree Board or Department
Standard 2: A Tree Care Ordinance
Standard 3: A Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at Least $2 Per Capita
Standard 4: An Arbor Day Observation and Proclamation

Each recognized community receives a Tree City USA flag, plaque, and community entrance signs. Towns and cities of every size can qualify. Tree City USA application forms are available from your state forester or Arbor Day Foundation at arborday.org/treecity or contact your state forestry agency.

WATERING BAGS KEEP SOIL MOIST

Tree watering bags come in various sizes and shapes and go by names such as Ooze Tub and Treegator Bags. While these are not for all landscape trees, they can be especially handy for newly planted trees. They keep the soil cooler beneath them and make it easier to water regularly. Another advantage is they keep the soil color better than other methods and they help prevent weed cutter damage. Logos can be printed on some brands to show ownership.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

There are so many underground utilities that it is important that you know where these are before digging to plant a tree, dig out a stump, lay an irrigation line, or do any other digging. The nationwide number is now available to help make it easy to have your underground utilities located and marked – and the service is free. A few days before you dig, simply phone 811 and your call will be directed to the local one-call number and appropriate local utility. This will help avoid damage, disrupted service and possible fines and repair costs.

Finding More Information...

An urban tree and its country cousin are in two different worlds. In a forest, a tree is in a specific site because of the natural sorting and sifting that is part of ecology. The tree is usually well matched to the microclimate, including the soil in which it is growing. In urban sites, most trees can use a little help from human friends to overcome alterations in the soil and other stresses resulting from the activities of urban life.

Living with Urban Soils

Out of sight, out of mind, is not the right attitude toward soil when trees are at stake. Soils and soil management are especially critical in urban settings where the work of nature has largely been altered by human activity. Your knowledge of soils — and the nourishment, water and anchorage that they alone can provide for trees — will help assure success for new transplants and long life for older trees.

The lovely soil. We call it dirt, walk on it, cover it with concrete, and have long lost the reverence of our forebears who called it Mother Earth. Yet from the soil comes our very existence, and where it is rich, life is rich. The pioneers knew this well and let the soil be their guide to locating farms and villages as they spread across the land.

Today nobody locates their home because of the soil. We live where we must and in most cases never give a thought to the soil. But for those who love trees, soil must once again be our guide. By understanding a few basics you can be sure to select the species that will do best in your soil. You can also improve the health, vigor and longer life for your trees by including the following soil management techniques in your plans for tree care.

CITY TREE — COUNTRY TREE