

*Success Tip...*

## **Lawn Mower Blight**

When a tree is bumped or scraped by a lawn mower, the resulting wound can actually threaten the life of that tree. Not only is the wound itself damaging, but disease organisms can also enter the wound, causing further problems. We call this “Lawn Mower Blight”!

The bark of a tree serves an important purpose, transferring sugars from the leaves to the roots, and water from the roots back to the leaves. If the bark is destroyed, the tree has no way to feed the roots, they begin to decline and eventually, the tree dies. Micro-organisms can also attack damaged bark, cause decaying, which can move inward and eventually cause structural damage.

Now, Lawn Mower Blight occurs when gardeners try to trim the grass around tree trunks with the lawn mower. String trimmers can also cause this damage. We call this “String Trimmer Blight”. The mower bumps the bark or the string trimmers bruise the bark and the damage is done.

Preventing Lawn Mower and String Trimmer Blight is simple - remove all the turf around the base of the tree and replace it with mulch. Mulching not only cuts down competition between the tree and the turf, it also helps conserve moisture for the tree roots.

Remember - never mulch more than 1-3 inches deep, and never, ever place the mulch directly against the trunk of the tree. That can cause “Mulch against the trunk of the tree blight”, which is a whole nuther story.

