

## IN THIS ISSUE

Fall Foliage  
Soil Fertility  
The Benefits of Mulching  
And Much More!

## Harnessing Green Technology for a Greener Planet

In the pursuit of a more environmentally conscious future, homeowners, property managers, and landscape professionals are embracing green industry standards and harnessing the potential of emerging green technology innovations.



### Paving the way for a greener and more sustainable future

From smart irrigation to mulching and composting, these innovative solutions offer benefits to both residential and commercial properties.

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## TIPS FROM THE TOP

by Carmine Schiavone, CEO

### Corporate Environmental Responsibility at SavATree



Amid nationwide conversation around corporate environmental responsibility, I wanted to share with our valued customers that at SavATree, sustainability has been core to our mission for decades and continues to be a focus in how we run our operation. This article will outline a few ways we employ sustainable strategies to benefit the communities we serve.

The heart of our mission is improving the health of trees and green spaces. Their value as ecological and aesthetic benefactors cannot be overstated. From better air and water quality to energy conservation, noise reduction, and urban heat mitigation, trees offer advantages for our health, and local wildlife, too!

Healthy trees increase property values by making green spaces more beautiful and sustainable. In fact, the Arbor Day Foundation states that a tree adds over \$40,000 of community benefits in its

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# How and why does foliage change color in the fall?

## THE COLOR-CHANGING PROCESS

Trees take water from the ground and carbon dioxide from the air, combine it with sunlight, and end up with oxygen and carbohydrates. This process is called photosynthesis, from the Greek, "putting together with light," and a molecule called chlorophyll is what makes it all possible. Chlorophyll is what produces the green pigment in foliage.

As the days grow shorter and cooler, it signals to trees to start preparing for winter by shutting down their food-making processes, resulting in chlorophyll production slowing down to a stop.

Most people don't realize that the colors yellow and orange have been present in foliage all year. While the green-hued chlorophyll is dominant during the growing season, once the chlorophyll recedes, yellow and orange become visible – creating the dazzling fall colors.

As for those reds and purples, they're created from leftover carbohydrates in the foliage. When combined with cooler temperatures and bright sunlight, they turn the foliage red or purple, depending on the tree species.

## CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Environmental conditions such as drought and excessive heat also impact foliage colors. Stressed trees often experience early leaf drop, limiting their contribution to the fall color display. Keeping your trees properly fertilized and irrigated during the spring and summer will help to maximize their autumn potential.

Foliar diseases contracted during the spring and summer months can reduce or eliminate fall color displays. These diseases must be treated preventively to reduce their impact during the fall foliage season.

While the phenomena of foliage changing colors is a scientific marvel, many wonder why trees need to drop foliage at all. Leaf tissues are incredibly tender and would freeze in the winter due to their moisture content. This would cause incredible stress to the tree, so rather than expending its limited energy during the winter dormant season, the tree sheds its foliage beforehand.

As for conifer trees, they typically lose some of their older, less efficient needles every fall to make room for new growth in the spring. Needles often turn yellow or brown, which can be a sign of disease and infestation. However, if the coloration appears in the late summer/early fall, chances are it's part of the process all conifer trees experience to encourage new growth.

Additionally, the needles on conifer trees are covered with a heavy wax-like coating and have unique physical and chemical properties that help them resist freezing and emerge from the winter months intact.

**Fall fertilization performed by a certified arborist can help enrich trees' root systems, enhance their overall health, and prepare them for an even more vibrant display next year.**

## TIPS FROM THE TOP (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

lifetime by removing about 48 pounds of carbon annually and retaining up to 100 gallons of ground water otherwise lost to runoff.

SavATree recognizes trees' crucial role in cooling and shading amid global heatwaves. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, trees have the remarkable ability to lower urban temperatures by 10°F by shading homes and releasing vapor into the air through their leaves. The International Society of Arboriculture further notes that deciduous trees "cool homes in the summer and allow the winter sun to heat homes when they lose their leaves," reducing the need for heating and cooling systems by up to 25%.

In the effort to further reduce our carbon footprint, we've shifted to smaller truck engines for fuel-efficiency, cutting greenhouse gas emissions. We also offer eco-friendly plant health care programs that boost soil health and aid vital pollinators like bees and butterflies.

SavATree offers tree preservation solutions to municipalities such as mapping canopy change over time, which provides insights on how trees are succeeding in the landscape, health optimization, and tree planting strategies to support urban resilience.

For example, SavATree completed an evaluation of trees along the High Line Canal, an astonishing 71-mile-long park that weaves through the Denver metropolitan area. We strove to attain balance between water infrastructure improvements and preservation of the green oasis that the High Line Canal offers the Denver community.

We are continuing our work with ever more communities around the country as we know that maximizing tree canopy substantially improves air quality, removes particulate matter, and makes our communities better places to live.

At SavATree, sustainability is more than just a goal – it is core to who we are as a company. We will continue to seek ways to propel our organization to the forefront of corporate environmental responsibility in the green industry, and I look forward to sharing updates on our progress.

Sincerely,



Carmine

# The Link Between Soil Fertility and a Thriving Landscape

To achieve lush gardens and flourishing lawns, the top priority lies at the very bottom: the soil.

Soil fertility serves as the backbone of any successful landscape. It is the soil's ability to provide the essential nutrients that promote robust plant growth and overall health.

Having the ideal pH level in your soil helps plants and lawns better absorb nutrients while keeping unwanted weeds at bay. Additionally, ideal pH levels increase the population of beneficial microbes while loosening the ground for proper water penetration and airflow to the root system.

**The soil's pH level is often a result of geographic location and environmental conditions. Areas with heavy rainfall and poor drainage are likely to have acidic soil, while soils in drier climates tend to be alkaline.**

The pH level in the soil is measured on a scale of 0 to 14 – extreme acidity at the low end of the scale and extreme alkalinity at the top. The proper balance for optimal



growth is usually somewhere between 6.0 and 7.5.

Soil pH levels near neutral – around 7.0 – allow the most mineral nutrients to be available to trees, shrubs, and lawns. Soils that are too acidic often lead to poor plant growth caused by aluminum or manganese toxicity or a deficiency in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, or molybdenum. Soils that are too alkaline often lead to poor plant growth due to deficiencies in iron, manganese, zinc, boron, or copper.

**Boosting soil fertility in the fall season sets the stage for strong root growth in trees and plants in the spring.**

The first step is to have an expert arborist perform a soil analysis. Soil testing will help identify the most effective fertilization applications and soil amendments for the unique conditions of the landscape.

- **ArborKelp®** is SavATree's organic sea kelp-based biostimulant that promotes healthy root growth, improves soil structure, and augments soil microbial activity essential for nutrient absorption.
- **Organic Soil Enhancer** is a treatment that incorporates carbon-rich liquid organic matter designed to rebuild the organic profile of your soil. Resulting benefits include enhancing soil texture and drainage while fostering the growth of beneficial soil microorganisms.
- **Mycorrhizae** are essential fungi that form symbiotic relationships with plant roots to increase nutrient and water availability, increase disease resistance to soil-borne pathogens, and protect vulnerable root tips during drought.

**To have the soil on your property tested, contact your local SavATree branch today.**

Your landscape professional will then provide a full report of your soil's pH levels and what steps (if any) are necessary to help improve the overall soil makeup.

# Harnessing Green Technology

CONTINUED FROM COVER

**Smart irrigation systems** adjust watering schedules based on weather conditions and soil moisture levels, which ensures that plants receive the optimal amount of water, preventing overwatering and waste.

**Rainwater harvesting** involves collecting rainwater from rooftops and storing it for later use in irrigation. You can capture rainwater by installing rain barrels or larger cisterns, reducing the reliance on potable water for landscape irrigation.

**Soil moisture sensors** enable more efficient irrigation practices by providing real-time data on soil moisture levels. The sensors help to avoid overwatering or underwatering and promote water conservation by ensuring plants receive the right amount of water at the right time.

**Mulching** helps conserve soil moisture by reducing evaporation, which reduces the watering needs of your plants and suppresses weed growth. Additionally, organic mulches enrich the soil with valuable nutrients and improve overall soil and plant health.

**Composting** is a great way to enrich soil with added nutrients and organic matter. Recycling organic materials like kitchen scraps and yard waste will help improve soil structure naturally and promote healthy plant growth.

**Drought-resistant landscaping** involves using native and drought-tolerant plants that require minimal watering. This approach is especially valuable in regions prone to frequent droughts, and offers several benefits, such as water conservation, stronger resistance for plants during dry conditions, less maintenance, and reduced water runoff.

**Renewable energy advancements** such as wind and solar panels provide clean and sustainable sources of electricity, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and air pollution.

**Organic fertilizers and pest control solutions** that are derived from natural sources provide environmentally sensible options for plant care. Organic fertilizers nourish the soil and promote long-term fertility, while organic pest control methods target pests without harming beneficial organisms and minimize environmental impact.

Green technology is revolutionizing landscape care, empowering homeowners and property managers to create beautiful, thriving outdoor spaces while embracing environmentally sensible practices.

Sustainable solutions are becoming more accessible than ever before. You can have a picturesque landscape that enhances the property's aesthetic appeal and also supports a healthier planet.

**For expert guidance on smart and sustainable landscape care, SavATree stands ready to provide recommendations tailored to your specific needs. We can help your outdoor spaces flourish while contributing to a greener, more sustainable future.**



# The Secret to Thriving Trees and Lush Landscapes: MULCHING

There are a wide variety of mulch materials, each with its unique set of characteristics and advantages. The choice of mulch depends on factors such as the specific landscape needs, aesthetic preferences, availability, and local climate. Beyond aesthetic appeal, mulching offers numerous benefits that contribute to a flourishing outdoor environment.

## Retain Moisture and Prevent Drought Stress

Mulch acts as a natural moisture reservoir for trees and shrubs. By covering the soil's surface, it helps retain water, reducing the frequency of irrigation needed. During dry spells or droughts, the mulch layer slows water evaporation, providing more consistent moisture to plant roots.

## Regulate Soil Temperature

Proper soil temperature is critical for plant health. Extreme temperatures can harm roots and impede nutrient absorption. Mulching plays a vital role in regulating soil temperature by acting as a protective barrier.

## Control Weeds and Reduce Competition

Weeds compete with trees and shrubs for essential nutrients, water, and sunlight. Mulching suppresses weed growth by depriving them of the sunlight they need to germinate. As a result, desirable plants have less competition for the available resources required for optimal growth and vitality.

## Other important benefits of mulching include:

- Enhances soil health and fertility by enriching the soil with valuable nutrients
- Prevents soil erosion by acting as a protective layer against heavy rain and strong winds
- Encourages root development by creating a loose and porous environment, allowing roots to penetrate deeper into the soil and access more water and nutrients

## Mulch Types

### ORGANIC MULCH

**Wood Chips:** Chipped tree branches that decompose slowly, enriching the soil with nutrients over time.

**Bark Mulch:** Made from tree bark; durable, and available in many sizes and colors.

**Pine Straw:** Pine needles commonly used for acidic-loving plants like azaleas and rhododendrons.

**Cocoa Hulls:** Dark-colored mulch with a pleasant chocolate aroma. Caution is needed as it can be harmful to pets if ingested.

### INORGANIC MULCH

**Gravel and Stone:** Non-organic mulches ideal for weed suppression and used in low-water areas.

**Rubber Mulch:** Made from recycled rubber, long-lasting but does not improve soil health.

### LIVING MULCH

**Groundcover Plants:** Low-growing plants that act as living mulch, covering the soil and suppressing weed growth.

### STRAW AND HAY

**Straw:** Used in vegetable gardens to retain moisture and prevent soil erosion.

**Hay:** Can be used as mulch but may contain weed seeds, leading to unintended weed growth.

### COMPOST

Can be used as mulch or mixed with other types to enhance soil fertility and overall plant health.



## LANDSCAPE CALENDAR

### September

- Plant new trees and shrubs
- Continue to water lawn, but adjust as temperatures cool
- Treat trees and shrubs for late season insects and mites
- Arrange a storm damage prevention audit
- Continue to water trees and shrubs suffering from summer stress
- Consider winter pre-emergent applications to prevent annual bluegrass and other winter weeds

### October

- Apply antidesiccants to bolster the defenses of trees and shrubs against freezing temperatures
- Nourish your trees and shrubs with a deep root fertilization
- Mulch beds of broadleaved evergreens (rhododendrons, azaleas, etc.)
- Consider an organic tick treatment
- For Tall Fescue, core aeration will improve water, air and nutrient movement in the soil and overseed to thicken and improve the lawn

### November

- Prune, cable and brace trees to help reduce the risk of storm damage
- Prune back perennials
- Review and confirm your plant health care and lawn programs for the coming year

### December / January / February

- Prune fruit trees to enhance fruit production
- Perform maintenance pruning of shade trees and ornamentals
- Grind stumps
- Perform woodlot management
- Schedule inspection of your tree cables and lightning protection systems
- Prune evergreen branches for indoor winter decoration
- Take down dead or hazardous trees

Mulching is a powerful tool in ensuring the vitality of any landscape.

To schedule a complimentary consultation, visit [savatree.com](http://savatree.com) or contact the office nearest you.



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## Ambrosia beetle infestations pose a significant threat to Georgia's trees.

**One of the most apparent signs of an infestation is the dust accumulating at the tree's base, which results from beetles boring into the wood.**



Dust visible on bark

Ambrosia beetles prefer most ornamental and fruit trees, particularly trees in distress. Attracted by the tree's natural chemical emissions, these tiny insects bore into the wood and introduce symbiotic fungi, which weaken the tree's defenses and obstruct its vascular system. While they are considered part of the wood borer family, ambrosia beetles feed on the fungus rather than on the wood itself.

They typically have multiple generations per year, with adult beetles attacking trees in the spring and fall. Ambrosia beetles are known to attack freshly cut lumber and undried lumber used for decking, which often causes pinhole defects in the wood.

There is severe economic damage to wood products in some regions and aggressive control programs are required to minimize the impact. Removing wood and processing it quickly is the best way to avoid beetle damage.

Tree care and maintenance is also essential to deter ambrosia beetle attacks. By removing dead trees and limbs, and making sure trees are healthy and strong, you can reduce the risk of infestations.

### Proactive care is key.

Every tree in the urban forest is experiencing stress due to environmental concerns, making fertilization and nutrient programs even more critical. During fall and spring, SavATree's ArborHealth® organic blend fertilizer offers micro and macro nutrients to the soil that are essential for overall plant hardiness, helping trees build resistance against various insects and diseases.

Your arborist may also recommend our borer treatment program to mitigate existing infestations.



Contact your local arborist today to assess your trees for signs of infestation.

## Fertilizing in the Fall

While forest trees get plenty of nutrients from the breakdown of leaves and other organic matter, the trees and shrubs on well-kept properties aren't so lucky. The lack of nutrients can make for trees that grow slower, are more susceptible to insects and disease, and have shorter life spans.

The fall is a great time to give trees and shrubs a nutritional boost to help them recover from summer stress and gear up for the cooler weather.

To help deliver the good stuff straight to the roots, we use specialized soil injection equipment to deliver liquid tree fertilizer six to eight inches beneath the soil surface. This process is called deep root fertilization.

### How to tell if trees need fertilization:

- Yellowing or off-color leaves out of season
- Visible dieback
- Stunted new shoot growth
- Loss of leaves
- Unusually small leaves

Reach out today to learn more.



Contact us for a complimentary consultation via the link below or call

**1-800-341-8733**



[savatree.com](http://savatree.com)

SavATree has local offices throughout the country.

For a complete list of locations visit [savatree.com](http://savatree.com)

### Our services include:

- Tree and Shrub Pruning
- Tree Removals
- Cabling and Bracing
- Custom Blend Fertilization
- Insect, Mite and Disease Treatments
- Organic Tick & Mosquito Treatments
- Professional Lawn Care
- Soil Amendments
- Organic and Hybrid Options

### Consulting services:

- Tree Protection & Preservation
- Canopy Management
- Tree Inventory / Risk Assessment
- Tree & Landscape Appraisal