



Dear Resident,

In an effort to maintain and improve the health of our urban canopy, the Chagrin Falls Shade Tree Commission and Chagrin Falls Service Department are starting a program designed to effectively address the issue of stem girdling roots and lack of vigorous growth on trees on Village tree lawns.

A stem girdling root is a dysfunctional root which instead of growing outward grows against the trunk of a tree. This stem girdling growth squeezes or compresses the sapwood of a tree. Eventually this compression may severely retard the flow of water, nutrients, and sap both to and from the roots. This restricted flow causes a tree to become increasingly susceptible to secondary problems such as: **drought, insect damage, diseases, winter damage, and water damage**. Additionally, it is estimated that one-third to one-half of all tree loss during a windstorm can be attributed to distorted or dysfunctional roots. Distorted or dysfunctional roots also serve to significantly shorten the life-span of a tree.

One of the major causes of stem girdling roots is the piling up of mulch against the trunk of a tree. This practice, known as volcano mulching, encourages adventitious roots (those growing out of stem tissue above the tree's normal root flare) to grow in a direction that, if not addressed, will become stem girdling roots.

During the next several years, the Chagrin Falls Shade Tree Commission and Chagrin Service Department intends to address stem girdling roots on all village trees with a diameter of four inches or less. The trees on the tree lawn in front of your house have been selected for this reduction of stem girdling roots program. Therefore, within the next several weeks you may see members of the Shade Tree Commission and employees of the Chagrin Falls Service Department working in front of your house. They will be using a high pressure hose/air knife to remove excess mulch from around the base of the tree. Any uncovered stem girdling roots will be addressed at that time. Once the crew leaves you should notice that a space of up to six inches in diameter has been left around the trunk of the tree. Please do **not** cover this space with mulch. If needed, members of the Shade Tree Commission and Service Department will add mulch.

We appreciate your cooperation in this project aimed at improving the overall health and longevity of the trees of our village. If you have any questions, please call 247-5053.