Ready or not, the summer months are upon us and that means dry and hot weather. This not only affects us, but also the trees planted at our homes and in our community. The City’s Urban Forestry Division works hard to ensure our local tree canopy stays healthy, managing more than 16,000 trees. However, we can’t do it alone! Proper and sufficient watering of trees is vital to the health of our tree canopy.

Is your tree still young and staked? If so, give the tree 10 gallons of water once a week. This can be easily done with a 5-gallon bucket or a hose. Once the roots are established and staking is no longer needed, weekly water is no longer necessary.

Is your tree mature? Supplemental water is only needed once a month during hot and dry weather, twice a month during prolonged heat waves. Drip or flood irrigation over the critical root zone is best. Avoid overhead spray, if possible. If overhead spray is the only option, do not allow water to spray the tree trunk!
Another way to ensure the health of your trees is to remove turf, weed cloth and rocks from around your trees and add a 4-6 inch deep layer of wood chips over the critical root zone, avoiding the trunk. For more information on caring for trees, please visit the City’s Urban Forest Division webpage at CityofDavis.org/City-Hall/Urban-Forestry.

CLEANING OUR WASTEWATER

The Clean Water Act in 1972 established requirements for federal, State, and local agencies to control the discharge of pollutants to rivers, lakes and other waterways in the United States. The Clean Water Act also initiated the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to control point-source discharges to waterways.

The City of Davis’ Wastewater Treatment Plant has an NPDES permit to ensure that treated wastewater leaving the treatment plant meets the Federal standards. One of the ways the City guarantees compliance is by ensuring that wastewater entering the City’s wastewater pipes does not contain pollutants that disrupt the processes at the treatment plant or that cannot be removed by the treatment plant.

As part of the NPDES Permit, the City is required to have a Pre-Treatment Program that inspects dental facilities, restaurants, breweries, groundwater remediation sites, laboratories and other commercial and industrial facilities that could potentially be discharging pollutants into the wastewater system. Some pollutants of concern that can be discharged at these facilities include salts, grease and heavy metals. These businesses are required to have alternative methods in place to keep these contaminates out of their wastewater or to remove them from their wastewater before it discharges to the City’s wastewater system.

The City of Davis is in compliance with all conditions originally authorized under the 1972 Clean Water Act.

One of the easiest ways to make sure our waterways stay clean is to not dump pollutants into our water. At home, there are simple things everyone can do to help keep contaminates out of our water.

1) DISPOSE OF HAZARDOUS WASTES PROPERLY. Household chemicals should never be disposed of in the sink or toilet. Residents can bring toxic items to the hazardous waste facility at the landfill for free every Friday and Saturday from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

2) DISPOSE OF MEDICINES PROPERLY. Unused medicines should never be poured down the sink or toilet. Bring unwanted medications to the landfill hazardous waste facility or to the pharmaceutical collection bin at the Davis Police Department.

3) DON’T FLUSH GARBAGE. Only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet. “Flushable” and disposable products such as wipes, diapers or feminine protection belong in the trash. Garbage can clog your pipes and the City sewer lines, creating messy sewer backups. In addition, once they reach the treatment plant, flushable wipes and other trash have to be mechanically removed from the wastewater before it can be treated.

4) NO FATS, OILS OR GREASE DOWN THE DRAIN. Avoid clogged pipes--save fats, oils and grease for recycling at the landfill hazardous waste facility or place them in the trash.
5) KEEP FOOD WASTE OUT OF THE SINK. Place food scraps in the organics cart and not down the garbage disposal. Plastic food labels on fruits and vegetables clog the filters at the wastewater treatment plant. Remove the plastic labels on fruit and veggies and place them in the trash.

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