

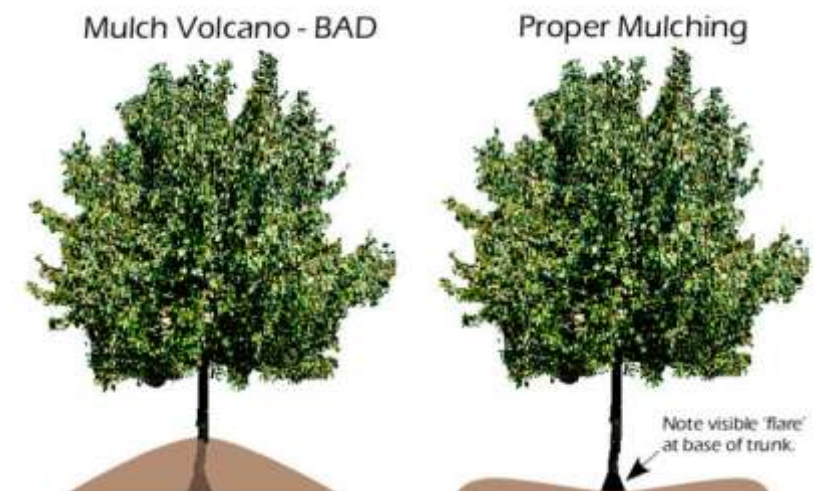
Tree Care – Beware of Mulch Volcanos

It's springtime and after a long hard winter we are all ready to clean up our places. Many of us prepare for summer by mulching. Mulch zones around new trees and shrubs are extremely helpful in protecting the young plant from mowers, string trimmers and other threats. However, mulch zones are often applied incorrectly, and actually contribute to the decline of the tree or shrub. The most commonly seen example of this is termed a "**mulch volcano.**" A mulch volcano occurs when mulch is applied too deep and pushed up against the trunk of the tree, as shown in the photo.

Mulch volcanoes can kill by girdling roots. If mulch is piled around the trunk, the roots will start to grow into it. These roots will then grow around the trunk in the mulch. As the root grows thicker, it pushes against the trunk, which is also increasing in size. These roots will eventually strangle the trunk and cause eventual death.

Mulch volcanoes make your trees more susceptible to disease & decay. Mulch piled against a tree trunk traps unnecessary moisture and decaying organic material against the bark. This often leads to disease and decay around base of trunk which prevents food and energy from traveling up and down the tree. It also creates an ideal environment for fungal and canker development in the trunk, leading to eventual death.

See the examples below for a comparison of a mulch volcano vs. a proper tree mulching.



Say no to the mulch volcano!