

# A HEALTHY TREE is a HAPPY TREE

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### Girdling Roots

Trees can slowly weaken and die over a period of years or decades because of root girdling. Roots begin to grow around the main stem of the tree and cut off or restrict the movement of water, plant nutrients and stored food reserves.

Over time, growth of the branches on the side of the plant affected by the girdling will be slowed. As injury progresses, leaves will become smaller and lighter green, fewer leaves will be produced, and eventually the branch will begin to die back. Death of the entire plant can occur in five to 20 years; watering, fertilizing and pruning will do little to correct the problem. Normal trees have a gentle trunk flare or buttress at their base (Fig. 1). Trunks that grow straight up from the ground as though they were a telephone pole can be suspected of having girdling roots (Fig. 2). Trunks with a straight side or a concave depression on one side may also have a girdling root (Fig. 3).



Root pruning is an absolute must for any container-grown tree or shrub at the time of transplanting. Three to five slashes are made vertically down the rootball and about an inch into the rootball. One or two slashes into the bottom of the rootball are made at a depth of three to four inches. Some people go further by fraying out the pruned roots.

Frady Tree Care takes great pride and passion to care for your trees. Trees are TREMENDOUS renewable resources. They are valuable in respect to life and your landscape. We are here to serve your tree care needs by preserving and enhancing the quality of your property through tree care education and services.



Please call 888-853-8733 to schedule a free consultation with a certified arborist from Frady Tree Care. Thank you for visiting [www.fradytrecare.com](http://www.fradytrecare.com).  
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