

AIR SPADING

Benefits of Air Spading

Fight Compaction

Air spading improves the soil around existing root systems by reducing compaction. Less compact soils both allow new roots to grow easier and allow for the formation of macro and micro pores. These pores, or holes, in the soil hold air and water that roots need.

Proper Root Depth

Sometimes improper planting or mulching over the lifetime of a tree can lead to a buildup of dirt and mulch against the base of the tree. Tree trunks are not designed to be underground, and this practice leads to infestations and stem girdling roots.

Organic Material

The optional addition of a soil conditioner rich in organic material (like LeafGro) is highly beneficial to trees. Increased organic material in the soil provides nutrients to the root systems, and creates an ecosystem of microorganisms that work together to provide an ideal growing conditions.



Why would I want Air Spading?

Air spading is the act of using a high powered air tool to blast away the soil around the base of a tree without harming the root system. This can be used for a variety of applications.

Stem Girdling Roots

The most common cause for the use of an air spade is to identify and remove stem girdling roots (SGRs). These are roots that have encircled around themselves and the main trunk of the tree. Overtime, SGRs will restrict the flow of water and nutrients through the tree and end up choking it to death. SGRs are most often formed when trees are planted improperly, or mulch is applied against the bark. Prestige Tree Experts removes stem girdling roots found during any air spading procedure. Sometimes, a multi-season approach is recommended if a large percentage of the root system is found to be girdling.



Mulching

During the air spading process, the mulch and/or grass surrounding the trees needs to be removed. Sometimes, even relatively fresh mulch gets mixed with soil and old mulch. We can apply a nice, fresh layer of mulch to each tree, in a manner that would not cover the root collar or encourage future stem girdling roots to form. Mulch also limits competition between tree roots and the roots of grass and other plants nearby.

Other Services

Certain services work well in conjunction with air spading. Often, a "canopy cleaning" pruning service is recommended to remove deadwood. Further, certain chemical applications like growth regulators help stimulate root growth. This further stimulated growth takes advantage of the new, beneficial conditions the roots find themselves in, and can help to compensate for any root system removed due to girdling. Speak to one of our arborists about what exactly would work best for your tree!

General Tree Decline

Over 50% of a tree's living tissue can be found underground. The root systems are often out of sight, out of mind, however, they play a key role in maintaining the health of your tree. Air spading is a great way to fight compaction and ensure proper root and trunk collar depths. It is also a great time to introduce organic material and growth regulators in the soil, and to properly apply a layer of mulch. Even healthy trees benefit from these practices.

Miscellaneous and Specialty Reasons

Air spading can be used to make a way for drainage systems, irrigation pipes, low voltage electric, invisible fences, and many other sub-surface lines. Instead of digging or trenching, which rips and tears at the root system, air spading allows installers to work around existing tree roots. Air spading can also be used for root pruning and root barrier installations.

If you have any questions about air spading, or any other tree care services, please reach out to one of our arborists!

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