Healthy Trees for a Healthy Watershed

Trees have many benefits for communities and homeowners, including helping to slow and absorb rainwater. This helps to reduce the amount of stormwater that rushes off surfaces, and therefore reduces the amount of debris and pollutants that are carried to local water sources. Less than 19% of the land within the Tinker's Creek watershed remains forested. Increasing the number of trees within the watershed helps to achieve important goals, such as the reducing the occurrence and severity of flooding, which is one reason to make sure trees are planted correctly to maximize their benefits.

<u>Don't Drown the Roots!</u>

Tree roots require water, oxygen and warmth to grow correctly. When tree roots are buried too deep under mounds of soil and mulch, the amount of oxygen and water that reaches the roots is reduced. A tree responds by sending the root system towards the surface to seek out oxygen and water. This requires the tree to work overtime just for basic needs and reduces the amount energy used to develop a strong root system.

Some trees in this situation are able to develop normally overtime while others have a shorter life span and can suddenly die during wind or ice storms. Not only do we lose this tree to provide stormwater benefits, it can also add to the amount of woody debris that enters our waterways, causing damming and erosion of streams. Furthermore, unhealthy trees with shallow root systems do not promote the absorption of water into the ground as well as healthy trees with deep root systems, which provide a better pathway for water to filter into the ground.

For more information about correct tree planting methods, visit Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Forestry. For more information on the Tinker's Creek Watershed, visit www.tinkerscreekwatershed.org.