

## TREE AND SHRUB FERTILIZATION

### *Why Fertilize Trees and Shrubs?*

Forest trees usually thrive without the addition of fertilizer, which can give the erroneous impression that trees in general do not require it. However, while forest soils are rich in humus (organic matter) that is replenished by the decay of plant residues, urban soils are usually very low in humus and nutrients. Because leaves in home landscapes are removed (raked away), nature's recycling program for nutrients is interrupted. Because ornamental trees and shrubs are also subjected to harsh and unfavorable soil and environmental conditions, the need for fertilizer is even greater.

The addition of fertilizer not only improves the appearance and condition of trees and shrubs (Figures 1 and 2), but it helps them to better withstand minor insect and disease problems, drought, and other stresses. Fertilization is not a cure-all, but after years of research we have found that well-nourished trees do not have as many serious and costly problems as unfertilized trees.

### *What is the Best Fertilizer to Use?*

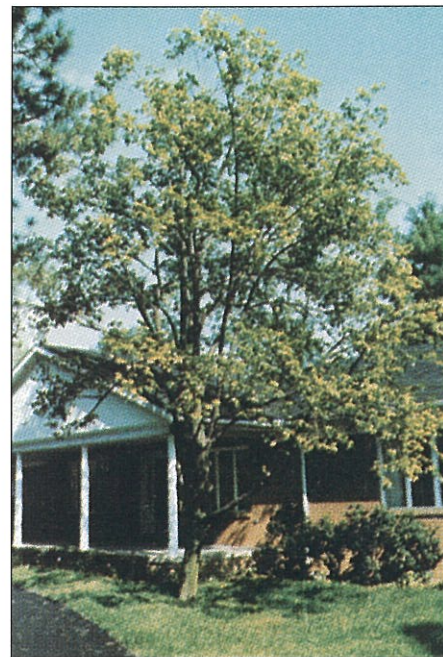
Davey's Arbor Green® 30-10-7 is a complete slow-release fertilizer, containing nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. The nitrogen in Arbor Green® is bound in organic molecules and then released in soil by microorganisms. This provides a prolonged availability, and the plants become more vigorous.

Fertilizers with high levels of water-soluble nitrogen release quickly and leach away, offering little nutrient carryover from one season to the next. Due to the complex nature of the organic compounds found in Arbor Green, the release rate is slow and consistent, resulting in a uniform growth response and healthier plants.

The salt index, which measures the salt concentration and, thus, the burn potential of fertilizer, is very low for Arbor Green. This means that Arbor Green will not burn the roots of trees and shrubs that have low salt tolerance, stressed or declining landscape plants, or newly planted trees and shrubs.

### *How Should Trees and Shrubs be Fertilized?*

Our trained professionals inject the proper amount of Arbor Green and water directly into the soil of the root zone. This technique, done under



*Figure 1. Before fertilizing*



*Figure 2. The same tree, after fertilizing*

pressure, provides better distribution of the nutrients in the soil profile for more efficient contact and absorption by the roots. It also improves soil porosity and replenishes moisture within the root system. Our Davey fertilization technique will help plants develop a denser root system, which will improve nutrient and water uptake.

The health and appearance of trees and shrubs will noticeably improve with fertilization. Because prevention is the goal, trees should be fertilized before problems occur.