Each new city tree planted through the Adopt-A-Tree (AAT) Program will have a “Treegator” installed by the contractor. A “Treegator is essentially a drip irrigation system in a bag. Designed specifically for trees, it slowly delivers water directly to a trees’ root system over an extended period of time; allowing for deep water saturation with no runoff or evaporation.

Newly planted trees lose much of their root system during digging. Because of this, they are much less effective at taking up water, and thus require much more water than established trees. Deep watering to a depth of at least 12 inches or more is recommended. To insure your new tree’s survival, your “Treegator” should be filled with water once a week for the first year. Just 5 minutes per week with a stand size garden hose ensures that your tree is properly and efficiently watered.

Many factors can influence your watering frequency, including rainfall, tree species and soil type and quality. This is why we recommend that you start with an initial application schedule of once a week, and then adjust it according to your trees needs.

In addition to watering please follow these tree maintenance guidelines as well.

1. The mulch should not be piled up against the tree trunk. Keep grass and weeds out of mulch.
2. Do not cultivate or otherwise disturb soil under the tree (e.g. do not plant flowers under trees.)
3. Keep lawn mowers and string trimmers away from tree to avoid wounding trunk--VERY important.
4. Never fertilize stressed trees. Fertilize only with slow release formulas, if at all.
5. Do not use herbicides that may leach into the soil around the tree (e.g. some “weed & feeds.”)
6. Inspect the tree often to head off problems early. Any problems should be reported to the Urban Forestry Division, 804-646-0681.

Please sign the line on the Street Tree Planting Application form to confirm that you have read the tree watering guidelines and agree to water your new tree for its first two years. Failure to do so may cancel the tree’s one year guarantee between the contractor and the City of Richmond.