How to Care for Trees in a Drought

During this historic drought, there are several things that you can do to help preserve our urban forest. As we continue to prioritize our water use, it is important to remember that trees are one of our greatest community assets. They improve air quality, provide shade, and beautify our communities. During this drought, they need a little extra help getting enough water.

Check first

Before you water, use a screw driver or other small tool to dig into the soil 4-6 inches. If the soil is wet, don't water. If it is dry, it is time to water again.

Watering

When watering a tree, use a watering tool with a slow release at ground level. The goal is to get the water to the roots which are typically 12-18 inches below the ground. Don't forget to check you water provider's watering restrictions.

For young trees

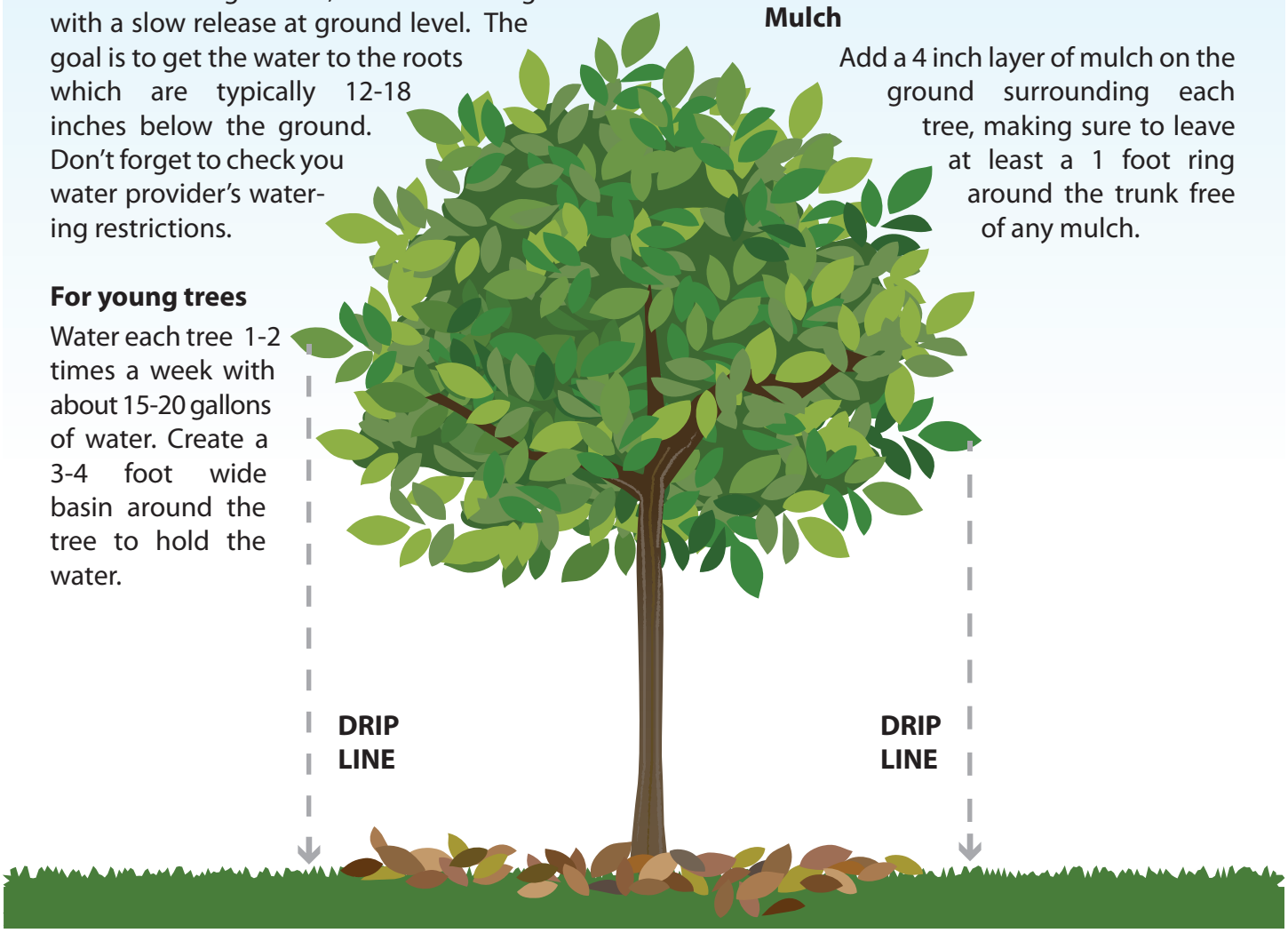
Water each tree 1-2 times a week with about 15-20 gallons of water. Create a 3-4 foot wide basin around the tree to hold the water.

For mature trees

Water each tree 1-2 times a month with enough water to soak down through the top 18" of soil. The size of the tree and kind of soil will determine how much water is needed. Water towards the edge of the drip line rather than at the tree trunk.

Mulch

Add a 4 inch layer of mulch on the ground surrounding each tree, making sure to leave at least a 1 foot ring around the trunk free of any mulch.



For more information on our urban forest, please visit us at dpw.lacounty.gov/rmd/parkways.