

DROUGHT TALKING POINTS

- Water is the critical element for tree survival and the availability of water will impact tree growth. Approximately 80-percent of the variation in tree growth is due to regularity of water supply.
- The term “drought” means “a period of time without precipitation.”
- During a drought, the water content of the soil is reduced to such an extent that trees can no longer extract sufficient water for normal life processes and those processes are disrupted.
- Various symptoms and damage occurs as trees respond to decreasing water availability.
- Deciduous trees: curling, mottling, scorching, shedding, early autumn colorations of leaves.
- Conifers: yellowing, browning of needle tips.
- Growing periods with little water can lead to reduced tree diameter and height, poor resistance to disease, and changes to physiological processes, such as fruit production and dormancy.
- As drought intensifies, harmful effects may be expressed in dieback of twigs and branches and the eventual death of the tree.
- Preventive measures include:
 - Weekly, thorough watering, if permitted in your area, under trees’ drip-lines.
 - Re-use of water, including dishwashing and laundry waste “gray water”.
 - Capture of gutter-water.
- Drought-resistant tree selection is a long-term solution for weathering periods without adequate water supplies.
- Certified Arborists can assist residents with the selection of drought-resistant trees and proper tree-planting techniques.
- TO FIND A CERTIFIED ARBORIST, VISIT THE GEORGIA ARBORIST ASSOCIATION WEBSITE AT GEORGIAARBORIST.ORG.