

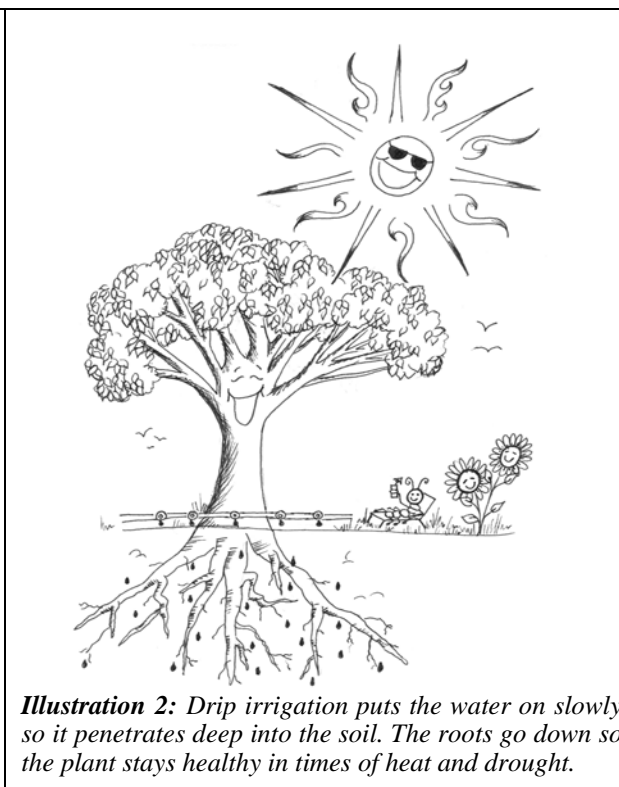
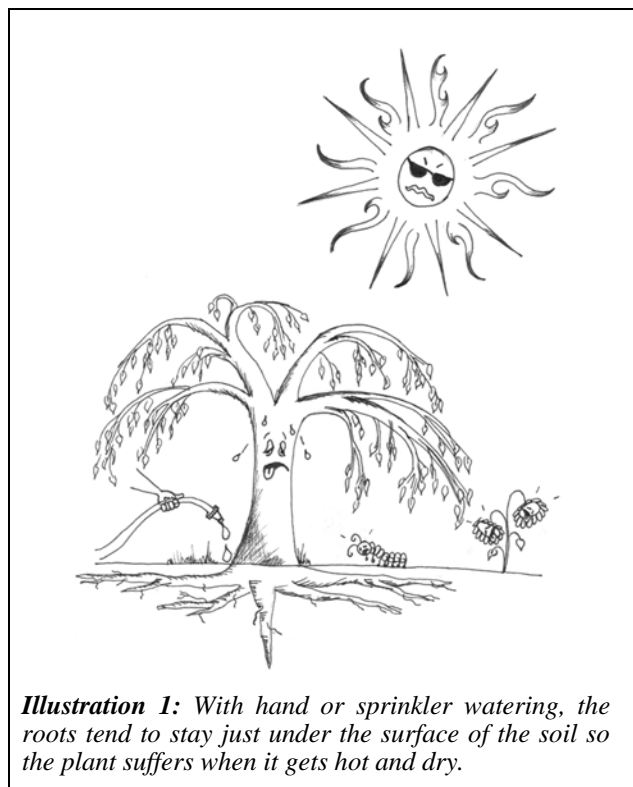
Drip Irrigation: Why and How

1 Saves you money!!! A drip system is less expensive to install than an underground system as the parts cost less and are very simple to use. Also, you use up to 70% less water because the water goes directly to the roots instead of flooding or evaporating. Proper use of a drip system can save money on your water bill.

2 Saves you time!!! Once your system is installed, all you have to do is turn on the faucet. (The system can also be hooked up to a timer.) By putting the water directly over the roots, you prevent excess weed growth, so you spend less time weeding.

3 Saves your plants!!! By putting the water directly on the roots with a sloooooow penetrating drip, your roots will go deep into the ground making your plants more drought tolerant. With hand watering or sprinkling, the roots stay right under the surface of the soil, so when it gets hot and dry, uh-oh! (*See illustration 1*)

When the roots penetrate deep into the soil, they will stay much cooler and draw moisture from below. They will require less water, less often as they become established. In a drought situation when you are not allowed to do any yard watering, your plants will be better equipped to withstand the dry spell. (*See illustration 2*)



4 Your plants will be healthier and happier!!! By the action of the slow, regular drip of water, the roots will stay moist but not saturated. They will then have a proper balance of oxygen and water. You will avoid the stress of having the shocking “drench and dry-out” cycle.

The transition from using a conventional sprinkler system to using a drip system can be confusing. A drip system puts water on sloooooowly for a lonnnnng time.

For example: with newly planted trees or shrubs, you will probably want to run your drip system for approximately 2 hours (this may vary with soil types) every 3-4 days.

As your plants grow and become established the length of time will increase and the frequency will decrease for the maximum results.

With trees you will eventually be watering 10-12 hours at a time but less often. When you water like this over time, the water and oxygen go deeper and deeper into the soil and the roots will follow. (See illustration 3)

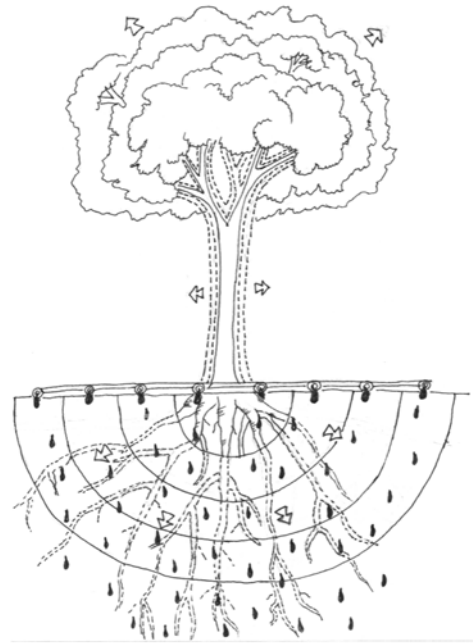


Illustration 3: Over time as the water and oxygen move deeper into soil, the plant's roots will follow.



Cool Tip:

As your tree grows, you will need to expand your drip system to keep up with the growth. You can easily do this by adding to the original line by using connectors and adding drippers as you go. (See illustration)

