Cutting Corners vs Quality Care

There are two frequently used products people use for their trees that I have been vocally opposed to and yet I seem to only see more of them. Perhaps if we bring them up as an article topic, more folks can be better informed. The two products are rubber mulch mats and fertilizer spikes. For this week we will discuss these lovely rubber mats. I hope you hear my sarcasm in the word lovely as I think just the opposite. Advertisements for these mats claim they save time and labor. However, like most things in life of quality and value, they take time and effort. For that reason alone, the advertising for these matts flunk from the start. There is no getting around the fact that it takes both time and effort to install and maintain a true wood mulched circle around your trees. While real wood chips and mulch have so many benefits to trees, these mats do not. They are made of recycled tires which leach toxic chemicals harmful both to plants and people. They do not suppress weeds and grass very well as is their claim. I have already pulled up several mats this year that were almost invisible because of the grass growing through them. Every time I find one of these mats around a tree I find it restricting the trunk or severely imbedded in the trunk. While maintenance deferred can be partly to blame, people seem to be putting the mats around trees and forgetting them because they last so long. I found a very in-depth article by a Texas composting company called Nature’s Way Resources. They give a very detailed breakdown of the negative aspects of these mats and it is well worth the read for more details than I have space for here. The link to it is [www.natureswayresources.com/DocsPdfs/RubberMulch.pdf](http://www.natureswayresources.com/DocsPdfs/RubberMulch.pdf). One funny thing they mentioned is that like a used tire, these mats are highly flammable and hard to extinguish. I may just buy one to experiment! In the end, cutting corners usually only ends up cutting quality and rarely does fake or imitation anything have lasting appeal or benefit.

For further questions, quotes and consultations, give us a call today! For more about Grace Tree Service check out our website!