# Root of the Matter IV

Last week we began addressing roots vs concrete. We acknowledged that while soil is not favorable for roots around concrete, sometimes they are forced to grow along and even under it to keep the tree from falling over. Remember the two main functions of roots are to deliver water and nutrients and to anchor the tree in the soil. I have put up a new picture under “The Stump” tab on our web site showing a Spruce planted way to close to a concrete parking pad. The primary wind blows from the west and this pad is directly west of the trunk. This tree has had to grow a substantial root system under this pad to anchor itself despite the adverse growing conditions under the concrete. Another example is when a tree is planted in a narrow planting strip between the sidewalks and street (like many are in the older sections of down town Coeur d’Alene) the tree will grow roots under the sidewalk and roadway. Another reason for them to tunnel under the sidewalk is to reach the front yard where lawns are irrigated and fertilized. (Again, remember the two main functions of roots). Many street sidewalks are raised or cracked from this happening. In conclusion, while tree roots will not seek out concrete to destroy it, the tree may be forced to grow near, under, or along concrete to anchor and feed its self. This in the end may result in some damage to sidewalks, patio foundations, and floors. My suggestion is to always plant with deliberate consideration with the available space, species and what size the tree will mature into. You and possibly generations to follow will be glad you did.

Next week we will talk about tree roots vs irrigation and sewer lines. As Always, for further questions consultations and quotes, give us a call today.