



ask

the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Email or mail your questions to: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or
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Question #1 this Week: *I have a tree in my front yard that was planted some time ago and appears to be completely dead. Can you come take a look and tell me what happened and if it can be saved – Kathy*

Linda's Observations: When we took a look at the tree, not only was it completely dead, it looked like a telephone pole (sides straight into the ground with no root flare at the base showing). We then excavated 6 inches down around the base of the tree and the picture shows what we discovered. The outer layer of the tree had been rotted away because the tree was planted too deeply. Unfortunately, this tree cannot be saved.



The tree bark forms the outer protective layer of a tree or shrub. Just under the outer bark is a thin layer of cells called the phloem that provides for the transport of sugars and water throughout the tree. Trees and other plants make their own food in a process called photosynthesis which converts carbon dioxide and water into oxygen and sugars the plant needs using energy from the sun. These nutrients are moved throughout the tree from the places where they are made (the leaves) to the places they are needed (roots and flowers) through a layer of cells called the phloem.

What has happened to the tree in the picture, by planting it too deeply, the outer bark and phloem were rotted away and severed so the food from the leaves could no longer make its way to the root system where it is used and stored.

When a tree is planted the root flare of the tree must be above the final soil level and mulch must not be heaped up the trunk like a "volcano". Excessive mulching can cause the same problem as planting a tree too deeply. If you suspect a tree has been planted too deeply, sometimes we are able to replant it correctly if it's not too large. Give us a call if you need help of any kind in your outdoor landscape.

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 19 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects..

Sprigs & Twigs is now scheduling appointments for Snow Plowing, 2016 Garden Design, Landscape Maintenance, Tree Care Services, Custom Stonework and Custom Carpentry Services. Visit our web site for details. Call us anytime to discuss your landscape needs and to meet with our staff.

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