



Celebrating 21 Years!

ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

EMAIL OR MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:
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**Thank you Readers for Voting Sprigs & Twigs
Best Landscape Company and Best Tree Service Every Year!**

Give us a call if we can be of service!

Question this Week: *my husband and I have just moved into an active adult community in Niantic. On my daily walk, I notice that many tree roots are running above ground. The trees seem to be healthy, but I wonder what makes these roots come to the surface instead of being deep in the ground? Thank you ... Linda*

Linda's Answer:

Hello Linda,

Actually, many types of trees have shallow root systems where roots are found within the top 8 to 12 inches of the surface and very often roots will be seen above ground. Relatively few trees have deep tap roots. Above-ground roots are generally not a problem for a tree, but can represent a danger to people as a tripping hazard or interference to lawn mowing. Trees roots adapt to their environment in order to get needed oxygen, water and nutrients. Above-ground roots are often seen in areas with compacted soil because the compaction deprives roots of oxygen and water that would otherwise be available in loose soil. As trees get older, surface roots grow larger as well. Wind and rain erosion causes surrounding soil to diminish and above-ground roots can become very prominent.

If you have above-ground roots and they become troublesome, you have several options.

- 1) Add a 3-4" layer of mulch around the tree (but not touching the trunk or root flare),
- 2) Add no more than 4" of good top soil and plant a shade-loving ground cover. (More than 4" of soil will smother the tree roots),
- 3) If the tree roots are causing structural damage to your house foundation or septic system, the tree should be removed and the stump and surface roots ground down to below grade.

Thank you for your question. If you have any tree care needs give us a call and one of our two CT licensed arborists can set up an appointment.

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 21 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 scheduling appointments for Garden Design, Landscape Maintenance, Tree Care Services, Custom Stonework, Custom Carpentry Services and Floral & Décor.

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