



TAKINGCAREofTREES
TREE & STUMP SPECIALISTS

TCT ADVICE

When is too much mulch too much?

Excessive Mulching around trees or shrubs can kill with kindness. There are many negative results from over-mulching around trees. This is especially true if the mulch material is piled around the trunk area - a practice, which unfortunately, is becoming more and more common.

Normally, trees should be mulched to a depth of 10 centimetres. When mulching around trees and shrubs, 5 to 10cm is the limit.

Problems resulting from over-mulching and piling mulch around the base of trees include:

- Oxygen starvation of the shallow roots
- Phloem tissue death (due to reduced oxygen exchange)
- Increased fungal and bacterial infections (from increased moisture around trunk)
- Heat build up from mulch decomposition kills stem and trunk tissue
- Mulches can modify soil pH
- Microbes in the mulch compete with tree roots for nutrition
- Accumulated mulch is a habitat for pests that feed on live plant tissue.

Gardening gurus frequently push the value of mulching, but fail to add that too much of a good thing can be lethal.

Take care and happy mulching!