SUPPORTING YOUR NEW TREE IN THE HIGH DESERT

One of the best ways to support your new tree is to maintain a steady water supply.

One-way to do this is to build an irrigation system. Another way, perhaps a better way, is to build a SPONGE. It is low tech and inexpensive. It can provide your tree with water in the high desert climate.

What is a sponge?

A sponge is simply a hole filled with water absorbing items that the roots of your tree can tap into. Another benefit of a sponge is that as the contents of the sponge break down, the sponge itself provides nutrients to your tree.

HOW TO BUILD YOUR SPONGE

1. Decide where you will be planting your tree.
2. Once your tree is planted go out in three directions forming a triangle. At each point of the triangle dig a hole.

* The size of a hole depends on the size of the tree.
* For a small tree the holes are closer and smaller.
* A large tree tree needs bigger holes further out, just beyond the drip line.

1. Next, fill your hole with water holding items such as:
   * Cardboard
   * Woodchips
   * Bulk mail
   * Leaves
   * Etc.
   * You can even add Growstone, pearlite or diatomatous earth.
2. Fill your holes with water and wait. You will want to fill this hole two or three times to ensure your filler is waterlogged.
3. Next cover it up and mark it.

Your tree will sense this water and seek it out.

WATERING – now when watering your trees, water the sponges.

At some point your trees will become established and won’t need the sponges anymore. Fortunately, you won’t need to dig them up. The sponge will break down and feed your trees.

As your trees grow and if you choose to do so, you can build new sponges to support a larger tree.

Sponges aren’t just for new trees; they can be used to support any plants that are having stable water issues.

Thank you for watching and GOOD LUCK with your sponges.

