








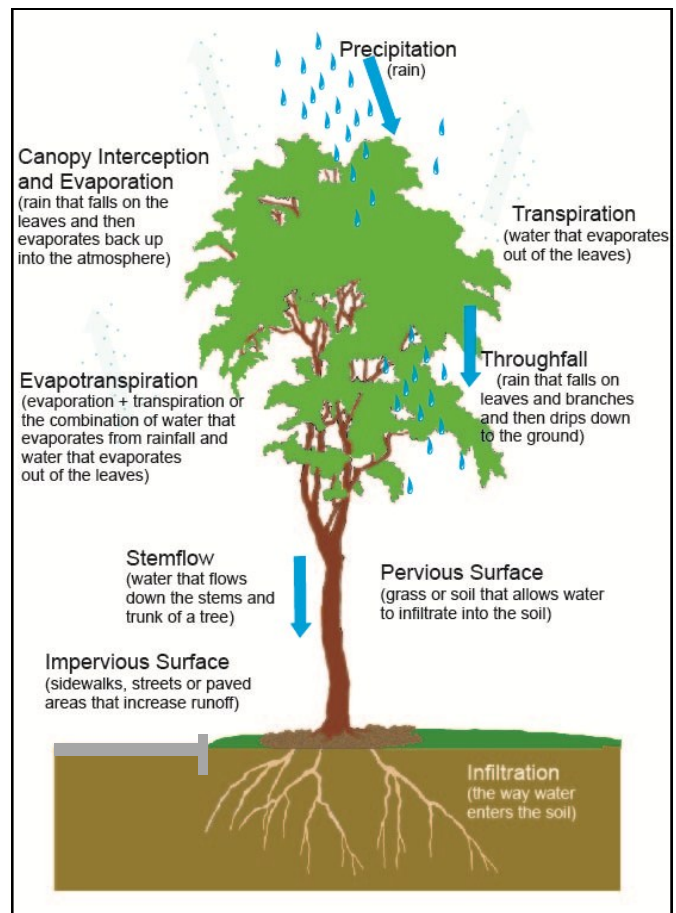
HEALTHY TREES, HEALTHY WATERSHEDS

A thriving urban forest provides a clean, healthy environment and helps to improve water quality throughout the City of Vancouver – in yards and along streets and streams. How we landscape can directly impact the quality of our vital water resources. As homeowners, landscapers and property managers there are a few simple steps you can take to help protect water quality where you live: remove high maintenance turf, plant new yard and street trees, preserve existing trees, use organic mulch, reduce your pesticide use and properly maintain your trees so they remain healthy.

Urban forests help to reduce the amount of polluted run-off that moves through urban areas and into lakes, rivers and other water bodies. Planting, properly maintaining and preserving trees creates a “green infrastructure” which is a cost effective and easy way to protect and restore the quality of our water resources.

A healthy urban forest can reduce the amount of runoff and pollutants entering our water resources:

-  Trees pull water up from the soil so more rainwater can soak into the ground instead of flowing directly to streams.
-  Leaves, branches, and trunk bark intercept and store rainfall, reducing runoff that can cause flooding.
-  A typical medium-sized tree can intercept as much as 2,380 gallons of rainfall per year in the Pacific Northwest.¹
-  Tree roots create space for rainwater to soak into the ground and reduce polluted runoff.
-  Tree canopies slow down raindrops, which protects soil from erosion.
-  Shade from trees cools the water in streams, making them healthier for fish and aquatic plants.
-  Tree root systems stabilize stream banks and prevent erosion when water levels are high.



THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- Use organic mulch
- Preserve existing trees
- Reduce your pesticide use
- Plant new yard and street trees
- Remove high maintenance lawns

References and additional information:

The Center for Urban Forest Research: *Pacific Southwest Research Station, USDA Forest Service, Davis, California, July 2002, Factsheet*
The Center for Urban Forest Research: *Western WA and OR Community Tree Guide: Benefits, Costs and Strategic Planting*
Day, S.D. and S.B. Dickson: *Managing Stormwater for Urban Sustainability Using Trees and Structural*
Environmental Protection Agency: *Using Smart Growth Techniques as Stormwater Best Management Practices*
Washington State University Pierce County Extension: *Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound*

