

PHS Tree Checkers Cheat Sheet



June 22, 2017

Mortality Status

Category (Code)	Description
Alive (A)	Green leaves and/or live buds, including trees with no leaves, but live buds and green tissue under bark
Standing Dead (D) <i>(note in Comments if never leafed out)</i>	100% dead above ground (may have sprouts at base), no green tissue under bark, branches snap, more than 12 inches in height
Stump (S)	Under 12 inches in height, there may be sprouts
Removed/Missing (R)	Tree was planted at site, but no longer present
Not Planted (NP)	You know tree was never planted (<i>no pit cut, data error</i>)
Unknown (U)	can't find tree site (<i>location notes unclear, multiple trees at site</i>)



Dead Test—if there are no leaves, but you find green tissue under bark of twigs -> Alive!

If tree is standing dead, record Crown Vigor, any comments, and then stop.

Crown Vigor Rating (*record for alive and standing dead trees only*)

Class Code	Description
1	Tree appears to be in reasonably good health; no major branch loss; less than 10% cumulative fine twig dieback, defoliation and/or leaf discoloration present
2	Light decline; major branch loss, fine twig dieback, defoliation and/or leaf discoloration present in 10-25% cumulative of the crown
3	Moderate decline; major branch loss, fine twig dieback, defoliation and/or leaf discoloration present in 26-50% cumulative of the crown
4	Severe decline; major branch loss, fine twig dieback, defoliation and/or leaf discoloration present in more than 50% cumulative of the crown
5	Tree is standing dead - same as 'Standing Dead' for mortality status, no live buds, twigs, or leaves



1



2



3



4



5

Site ID (e.g. 1-F, 2-F, 1-S, 1-R, Y)

F = tree on *front* block (same street as address)

S = tree on *side* block of address

R = tree on *rear* block of address

Y = *yard* or open space (not along street)

ID numbers correspond to tree position in relation to others and increase in the direction addresses increase on the block (update Site ID if incorrect)

Tips & Reminders

- Verify you are looking at correct tree (site info, species)
- Update Location Notes, Site ID, species if needed
- If tree planted at diff Address, add a new record
- **Every record should have a Mortality Status**
- “Flagged for PHS Data Review”-if error with planting data
- “Spoke with Homeowner” - if you talked or left report card

Circumference (cm)

Method

- Measure the trunk circumference at **137 cm** (54 in, 4.5ft) off the ground if no branches under 137 cm
- Keep tape perpendicular to the trunk and snug
- **Measure circumference to the nearest 1/10 cm, read tape in correct direction**
- **Record the height of the Circ. measurement (distance from base of tree) in nearest whole centimeter.**

Branching Below 137 cm (54 in, 4.5ft)

- Measure the main trunk just under the lowest branch (but not any higher than about 137 cm off the ground)
- Avoid any irregularities or swelling near converging stems

Tree with Irregularities at 137 cm (54 in, 4.5ft)

- Measure immediately above irregularity (swelling, bump, depression) where it ceases to affect normal stem form

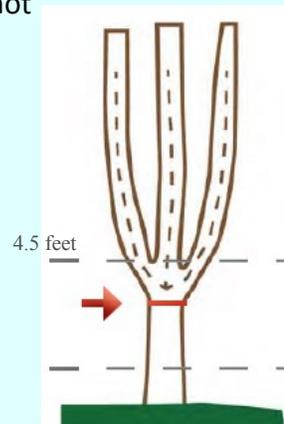
Equipment: flexible measuring/sewing tape in centimeter units (look for retractable kind); get at the Dollar Store or Walgreens, or make your own with ribbon

Adapted from the UTGL Urban Tree Monitoring Protocols Field Guide

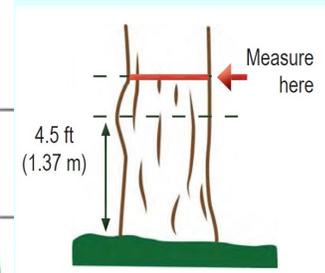
Circ. Measurement Height (cm)

Always record the exact height of circumference measurement to ensure consistency for future data collection—**record distance from base of tree, measure to the nearest centimeter**

Equipment: stiff measuring tape works better than flexible; or mark a 5' walking stick with 1 cm marks



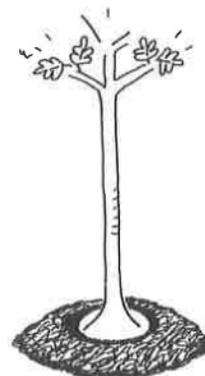
Graphic by J.P. Fristensky



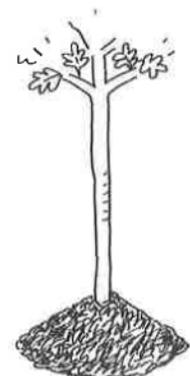
Graphic by L.B. Shafer

Mulch

Category (Code)	Description
Good (G)	About 2-4" deep, not touching tree
Poorly Done (P)	More than 4" deep and/or touching tree, volcano mulching
None (N)	None, or barely any organic material present (wood chips, shredded bark, compost, leaves)
Too Little (L)	Less than 2" deep and/or less than 1 ft radius



correct mulching



incorrect mulching