



**BROOKDALE
PARK**
CONSERVANCY

WATERING NEW TREES AND SHRUBS IN BROOKDALE PARK 2010

By George Prell

WHERE ARE THE NEW PLANTINGS?

The new trees and shrubs were planted along the Western-most pathway of Brookdale Park. The area extends between the Gordonhurst entrance (far south side) up to the "Body Curl" Training Exercise at the incline next to the Wildwood entrance near the Rose Garden (far north end). I counted about 180 new plantings. In addition, several pre-existing trees and shrubs were tagged with red tape to be retained within this planting area.

WATER SOURCES:

Water for plantings is supplied by Brookdale Park. The water faucets are found within the uprights of the two green water towers located in the small dog area. Special adaptors have been inserted to permit attachment of garden hoses. From the outside of the fence slide the hose inside at the base of the fence. As a rule, I first close OFF the yellow valve at the watering end of the hose. In that way when I connect the hose to the water tower I can fully open the faucet and do not have to return to the dog park until it is time to turn off and disconnect the hose. Note: As a safety precaution, be sure that the hose lies flat along the ground especially next to the water tower so that people will not trip over it.

EXTENDING HOSES ACROSS WALKWAYS:

This is probably our main safety issue, since many people will cross the hoses while walking, biking, jogging, or while using strollers. Some individuals are in poor health; others have limited vision or are blind. Some people just don't pay attention. The hoses must be very obvious and well marked. It also helps to warn people verbally about the presence of the hose.

Most often I extend the hose directly west from the south water tower such that the end with the valve crosses the walkway between the two opposing Brookdale Park Conservancy signs. They are on either side of the large tree about 50 feet N of the Mount Vernon entrance. When placing the hose across the path, put the orange cone next to it to mark its presence.

To minimally affect transit, place the hose at right angles to the pathway. The hose will be more obvious and safer for bike riders/joggers. Avoid having another hose on the walkway unless you are in the process of moving it. Warn passersby about what you are doing.

Even with these obvious markers, do not leave the hose across the walkway completely unattended. Stay near the watering area in case problems arise. (For example, if an incident occurs, someone might need assistance. If they inquire, we can also inform passersby about what we are doing and why.) If you must leave the area, disconnect the hose and place it well within the grass; place the cone behind a nearby tree or next to the hose that you placed in the grass.

HOSES ARE SUFFICIENTLY LONG TO COVER ALL THE NEW PLANTINGS.

We have sufficient hose length to cover the entire new planting area. Once the hose is stretched across the pathway, remaining lengths can be linked from near the Mount Vernon entrance pathway to the extreme ends EITHER south to Gordonhurst OR north to the "Body Curl" exercise site near Wildwood, but not both. Alternatively, to reach the North end more efficiently and use less hose, one can attach a hose to the water tower at the North end



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of the dog area and stretch it directly towards the Chester entrance. If you elect to do that, remember to use the orange cone and place the hose at right angles to the walkway.

HOW MUCH WATER TO USE?

My present policy is to focus on vegetation that appears to be most in need of water. The dogwoods tend to show the greatest signs of wilting. (There are 15: 4 just S of Mt. Vernon, 7 just N of Mt. Vernon, and 4 N of the Chester entrance.) Several of the conifers are showing yellowing/dying tips. At least one tree appears to be dead. The small plantings at the entrances of Mt. Vernon and Chester always seem to be in need of water. For that I bring my own sprinkler, until I get a replacement.

I use a "splitter adaptor" that permits water to project from 2 hoses at once. If joined close to the point of delivery there should be sufficient flow from both ends. A small length of hose works best. Note that water delivered from a single hose at full force might be too strong and damage the trees.

I built up mulch berms around most of what I was told were the dogwood trees and also some smaller trees. (Many more have yet to be built.) Most have been surrounded with stones to hold the mulch in place. They were made to retain water close to the tree roots, yet were spread out so as not to damage the new root balls. (Unfortunately many trees were planted incorrectly such that water quickly flows away from the trees; a death-sentence in this summer's drought.) When using the "splitter adaptor," I let water flow for 5 minutes at the base of 2 trees. Then I move on to another 2 trees for about 5 minutes, then I return to the first 2 trees for another 5 minutes. In this way, each tree gets about 10 minutes of watering with most of the water staying close to the roots. (When the splitter is used, 10 min = about 30 gallons total at the usual pressure.) I return to do these trees either when they show new signs of wilting or after 3 days.

With more volunteers a more systematic watering schedule can be adapted.

END OF WATERING TAKE DOWN AND STORAGE OF HOSES

When done, I recommend disconnecting and separating most the hoses. Exceptions are (a) the thin darker green hose whose two identical lengths are hard to separate and might better be left alone, and (b) the 3 lengths that usually extend from the dog park water source to the yellow valve: a smaller thin hose and 2 lengths of thick bright green hose.

Hoses should be stored far from the walkways. I usually use an area close to the weeds behind the 7 dogwood trees. I place the extra bucket, hose adaptors, orange cone, etc. behind nearby trees. Signs displaying the Brookdale Park Conservancy should indicate that this is part of our project.

Please keep hoses separated and orderly, so that they can be readily used by the next group of volunteers. We will waste valuable watering time if we have to untangle a mess of hose left behind by others.

BE CAREFUL.

Poison ivy abounds near several of the plantings. The holly leaves are sharp.

IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS, CONSIDER CALLING ME, GEORGE PRELL

My cell phone number is 973-650-3301. I live about 5 minutes from the watering sight and may be able to come over if you have significant difficulties.