A recent and serious trend has been the over-mulching of trees and shrubs. Though mulching has many benefits, trees are, literally, killed by over-mulching. Mulch piled high around and in contact with the stem or trunk causes slow death. It is also a waste of money and labor. Why over-mulching has become a common landscape practice is unclear. What is absolute, however, is that overmulching is a practice that needs to stop.