

## **Ripple Effect # 50 - Early Spring Pruning**

The sun is shining. You'd like to get something done in your yard.  
But the yard is wet—and you decide it's too early to start.

But it's not too early for one task at least: pruning your trees and shrubs.

In fact, the perfect time for pruning is March and April.

If we prune early enough, the pruning cuts heal quickly with the new spring growth.

When we delay this task, the tree has to put more of its energy into healing.

A few rules of thumb when you're doing the pruning:

--When you prune off larger branches (an inch or more in diameter), **LEAVE A SMALL STUB.**

--When you prune off smaller broken branches, **DO NOT LEAVE A STUB.**

--And never prune more than 15% of a **tree's** branches away at one time (most shrubs can take more extensive pruning).

An exception to early pruning are shrubs such as lilacs or spirea – pruning should wait until after they flower.

So, what are you waiting for? Put your boots on and go to work!

This Ripple Effect is brought to you by the Red River Basin Commission.