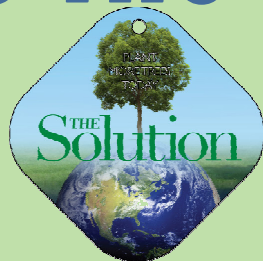


Trees Are The Solution



Trees offer partial solutions to many problems and challenges we face today in our society, environment and economy. While we all in some measurement have some understanding of the value of trees in our lives, this has been very difficult to communicate and to promote. Recently efforts have been underway to provide real and measurable data of the effects of Trees in our lives. While it remains nearly impossible to define the emotional benefits clearly, if you're a tree lover or even if you just happen to take notice of the peace and beauty Trees provide, we begin to realize that there is something deeply special about being surrounded by trees. You know, that sense of safety, relaxation, and comfort you feel when you're either deep in the forest or under the cool shade of a 200 year old Red Oak. To me, this is priceless and I wouldn't have any idea on how to value or measure these things, but it is being attempted by some!

Benefits of Trees can be measured in cleaner air, moderated storm runoff, sequestering of atmospheric carbon dioxide, higher property values, reduced energy consumption, improved human health and reduced crime. Recently economic researchers have begun to develop benefit calculation models that city planners are adopting and even the NFL, when measuring the effects of the Super Bowl to reduce the environmental impact of the event.

The New York City Parks department used this method to determine that the 600,000 street trees in its five boroughs provide an

annual benefit of \$122 million - more than 5 times the cost of maintaining them.

Urban Forestry will be a topic for the future in your community planners but for you the future can be today. The city of Portland Oregon has an exciting program called the Grey to Green initiative where they expect to plant 50,000 street trees by 2013!

The benefits of such an effort can already be measured and supported today. Recent studies have proved that on average street trees added \$8870.00 to a home's sale price and reduced days to sale by 1.7! Even more, a single tree raised the value of not just the home where it was planted but also for the neighbors. A tree with an average canopy of 312 square foot, a good sized Maple, added an average \$7130 in value to the house it fronted plus additional value to neighboring houses.

Listen, I sold my house 1 year ago, for the asking price, in a terrible market within 6 weeks of listing! My house had the good sized trees and plenty more that were planted to reduce energy costs and provide for years and years of enjoyment. I know first hand the value of trees when it comes time to sell property, it is real and trees made the sale higher and quicker than I expected.

Next month, we will look closely at the energy savings that can be realized annually from properly located and selected Trees for your home and neighborhood. Be part of the solution and plant Trees this year. The second best time to plant a tree is today, the best time was 20 years ago!

- Don Eaton

- Pennsylvania Pride Grow Team