

The Benefits of Trees

Trees are the most valuable plant in the landscape because they are the most useful. They are energy savers, air conditioners, and wildlife havens. You see, planting trees around your home not only adds value to your home but also helps the environment.

Just take a look at all of these facts about trees:

- In one year an average tree produces enough oxygen for a family of four, for one year.
- One acre of trees has the ability to remove 13 tons of particles and gases annually.
- The amount of fossil fuels used for heating/cooling is reduced by using trees to modify temperatures.
- One tree can remove 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere annually, equaling 11,000 miles of car emissions.
- To make up for the loss of trees in the past decade, we need to replant 321 million acres, which entails planting approximately 14 billion trees every year—for 10 consecutive years.
- Planting trees remains the cheapest and most effective means of drawing excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
- Planting 100 million trees could reduce carbon by an estimated 18 million tons per year, while saving American consumers \$4 billion each year on utility bills.
- Shade trees can reduce your heating/cooling costs by 10-50%!
- The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.
- 2.6 tons of carbon is sequestered in a year by one acre of trees and shrubs.
- 800 million tons of carbon is sequestered by all urban trees and shrubs in the U.S.
- Street-level particulate pollution can be reduced by 60% by trees and shrubs lining an urban street.
- One 12" caliper Sugar Maple can remove 5200 mg of lead from the air in one year.
- Trees and shrubs intercept water, store some of it, and reduce storm runoff and the possibility of flooding.
- Air quality can be improved through the use of trees, shrubs, and turf. Leaves filter the air we breathe by removing dust and other particulates. Leaves absorb carbon dioxide and other air pollutants (such as ozone, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide) and give off oxygen.
- Home heating and cooling costs can be reduced by 30% by well-placed landscape trees and shrubs.

- Studies indicate that trees and shrubs help create feelings of relaxation and well-being. By planting trees and shrubs, we return to a more natural, less artificial environment. The natural cycles of plant growth, reproduction, and decomposition are again present, both above and below ground.

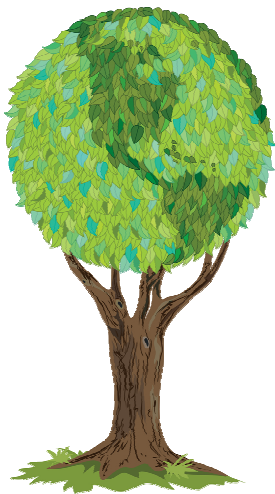
Here are just a few more ways that trees can “help” in your landscape:

- Winter warming/summer cooling
- Air conditioning
- Privacy
- Screen for objectionable views
- Glare control
- Sound barriers
- Windbreaks
- Wind obstruction
- Wind deflection
- Wind filtration

Now this list mostly covers the environmental benefits of planting trees, but don't forget the added home value of trees in your landscape as well. A landscape is something you will have for a lifetime; with the proper guidance (location, selection) your home will look great (and increase in value) for years!

Remember – any day is a good day to plant a tree, but Earth Day and Arbor Day are wonderful ways to celebrate the Earth and take part in improving our environment for generations to come.

- Heather Neuin
Pennsylvania Pride Grow Team



Happy Planting!