

Bring Life to Your Community Plant Trees

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Everyone recognizes the two most obvious benefits a tree can provide to their property. Trees cast shade and provide beauty. Most people seldom consider other benefits that healthy and well cared for trees offer to their owners. However, they probably don't realize the value of the shade and beauty a tree offers. Homeowners can make significant savings by properly using trees for shade. Some examples include improved human comfort; reduced heating or air conditioning costs; reduced peak loads on utility companies, thus reducing the chance of power outages; less reliance on imports of foreign oil and less pressure to develop domestic sources of oil, gas, coal or nuclear power; relatively short payback periods on the investment of planting trees; and less sunlight damage to curtains or carpets. All these things are long term benefits because of the life span of the trees they plant.

There is certainly a value in the beauty of trees, both emotional and economical. Emotionally, hospital patients have been shown to recover from surgery more quickly when their hospital room offered a view of trees. In a crowded urban environment, levels of aggression are significantly lower among people who have trees outside their homes versus those who don't. Kids who spend more time outside end up paying more attention inside. Economically, studies show that the addition of one well maintained, mature tree in a front yard will add one to two percent to the estimated value of a home. Houses that have an average of five trees in the front yard will sell for 3.5 to 4.5 percent more than comparable houses without trees. Street trees improve the curb appeal of a neighborhood, often increasing real estate values by 5 to 20 percent.

Other important but less recognized benefits trees offer are windbreaks, noise barriers and privacy screens. They can act as a living snow fence, trapping drifting snow in areas away from roadways and buildings. Trees bring natural elements and wildlife habitats into urban surroundings thus increasing the quality of life for residents of the community. They provide fruit and flowers to their owners. Tree leaves filter the air we breathe by removing dust and other pollutants. Their leaves absorb carbon dioxide from the air to form carbohydrates that are used in the plant's structure, resulting in the oxygen we breathe. One large tree can provide a day's oxygen for up to four people. Trees help to stabilize the soil with their roots and minimize storm water runoff by capturing rainwater with their leaves and canopies. This helps to trap sediments and filter chemicals originating from lawns, roads and parking lots before they reach the natural water course, keeping our water clean and more suitable for domestic and recreational use. Energy can also be derived from trees, and it's a renewable resource! Currently, about 4 percent of the nations energy needs come from trees, by using wood for heating or producing steam. Some experts estimate that this could be increased to between 20 and 30 percent.

Planting trees has been an American tradition since the first settlers brought seeds and cutting from European fruit trees. Every citizen can improve his surroundings and contribute to the welfare of his community by performing the simple act of planting a tree. The benefits realized by planting a single tree are magnified when citizens plant and care for the trees on their property and in their community. Can you imagine living in a place with no trees? Can you imagine wanting to? Be sure to get involved in your cities Arbor Day celebration. Encourage your city council to recognize the importance of caring for the resource that their community forest provides. Trees will repay the cost of planting and maintaining them many times over. So, "Bring Life to Your Community---Plant Trees!!!

BRING LIFE TO YOUR COMMUNITY



PLANT TREES