

Are the tree-huggers on to something?

In every child's first drawing of a house, what do you see? A modest home, a front path lined with flowers, smoke coming from the chimney, and yes – a tree. We all have our favourites – trees to hold a swing, to provide shade, to fill a view, to freshen the air, or just to send our eyes skyward. Trees are imbedded in our human imagination. We'll be coming up to tree-planting season again this fall. Here are just a few reasons why you should consider planting a new tree, or to take really good care of the trees you already enjoy:

BEAUTY

"I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree." Do you remember reading this in high school? Plant a tree for the sheer beauty of it.

SPIRIT

Urban planners say that trees bring out the best in people. We know that a tree-lined street is more inspiring and feels more friendly than a bare one. The tree-huggers are on to something.

OXYGEN

The green lungs of our neighbourhood, town, country, continent, hemisphere, and planet – trees give us the necessary air of life. We need more of them. If you need to remove a dying tree, make a plan to plant one somewhere as a replacement.

CLEANSE

Trees help remove carbon dioxide and other pollutants from our atmosphere. We need trees to do this for us – more now than ever. That fresh air in the forest? No coincidence. Thank the trees.

COOL AND SHADE

Trees can lower the air temperature around your home by many cooling degrees on those hot summer days. Not only do they provide much needed protection for you, your family, and your shade-loving pets, but they also emit cooling moisture into the atmosphere.

WINDBREAK

If you plant evergreens on the north side of your home, you can save energy dollars in the cold season. These stately trees provide a lovely backdrop for your summer garden, and when snow-laden in the winter – they look especially grand.

PREVENT SOIL EROSION

The root systems of trees will hold your soil in place – something to think about if you have steeper gradients on your property.

NATURAL HABITAT

Without our trees, where would birds and other creatures hang out? Plant a tree and watch for the arrival of the songbirds.

INCREASE PROPERTY VALUE BY UP TO 20 PERCENT

Yes, that's right. 20 percent. More in some cases, and that adds up to a lot of dollars.

PRIVACY

Screen yourself from traffic, unsightly views, and neighbours whose property is too close. Trees will also buffer sound: reducing some of the undesirable traffic, train, and mechanical noises, which surround us.

AUTUMN

What would our favourite season be without the glorious display of our deciduous trees? Yes, raking the leaves can be a chore, but it's worth it.

GO NATIVE

If you need to plant or replace a tree – select a native species. You'll find that native trees are: less susceptible to pests and disease, don't need as much water, and are altogether much less demanding than non-native species. Ask a local arborist (your city or town usually employs one) to recommend a tree for your property.

NATURAL LEGACY

Plant trees for your children, your grandchildren, and your great-grandchildren. Celebrate weddings, births, anniversaries and other special occasions with a tree. Tuck your note into a copy of Dr. Seuss' "The Giving Tree".



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