

Trees Help Save Energy



Trees help reduce heating and cooling costs. Strategically placed trees can be as effective as other energy saving home improvements, such as insulation and the installation of weather-tight windows and doors.

Trees help you save energy and reduce utility bill costs by providing cooling in the summer and wind breaks during winter.

A minimum of three large shade trees strategically placed around your home can reduce air conditioning costs up to 30%. Shade trees offer their best benefits when you:

- Plant deciduous trees, which shed their leaves during the winter. These trees provide shade and block heat during summer months, and by dropping their leaves in the fall they allow sunlight in the winter months.
- Place these trees on the south and west sides of buildings.
- Shade all hard surfaces such as driveways, patios and sidewalks to minimize landscape heat load.

Use evergreens, which retain their leaves/needles yearlong, in a planned pattern as windbreaks to save from 10-40% in energy used for heating. Evergreens offer the best benefits when you:

- Place them to intercept and slow winter winds, usually on the north side of your home.
- Do not plant them on the south or west side of your home, because they will block warming sunlight during the winter; these trees also provide some shading benefits during summer.

More Resources

Find a tree that's right for your space and our region. Contact your local nursery for assistance, and visit www.ci.richland.wa.us/EnergyServices then select Safety & Education. Use the Tree Wizard to select a proper tree, and review resources available from the WSU Master Gardener program.

Trees & Power Lines Don't Mix

If you have a tree growing into a power line, email PowerOperations.ci.richland.wa.us or call 942-7429 to have our certified arborist assess the suspect tree for free. If the tree needs to be removed, the City will remove it and provide a certificate for a "power line friendly" replacement.

