

The Value of Trees

Submitted by the North Oaks Natural Resources Commission

Studies show that trees have many positive effects on our lives. Good thing we are surrounded by trees in North Oaks! Here are a few interesting facts:

Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30 percent and can save 20–50 percent in energy used for heating (*USDA Forest Service*). When one North Oaks family moved into their home, their roof was shaded by a large American elm tree, which kept the temperature in the attic (and the home) cool. It wasn't until the tree died from disease that the family discovered there was a fan in their attic, programmed to run when the temperature in the attic was too hot. Without the tree, the fan runs nearly all summer!

Landscaping, especially with trees, can significantly increase property values. In one study, 83% of realtors believe that mature trees have a 'strong or moderate impact' on the salability of homes listed for under \$150,000; on homes over \$250,000, this perception increases to 98% (Arbor National Mortgage & American Forests).

Trees reduce noise pollution by absorbing sounds. A belt of trees 98 feet wide and 49 feet tall can reduce highway noise by 6 to 10 decibels (NJ Forest Service).

Views of nature reduce the stress response of both body and mind when stressors of urban conditions are present. In laboratory research, visual exposure to settings with trees has produced significant recovery from stress within five minutes, as indicated by changes in blood pressure and muscle tension (Dr. Roger S. Ulrich, Texas A&M University).

For more information and interesting facts about trees, please visit the Arbor Day Foundation's website (www.arborday.org).