

## Trees Can Save On Utilities

Properly spaced shade trees can help prevent home air conditioners from working overtime in scorching weather.

"We need to take a second look at plants as temperature control devices," says James A. Fizzell, Horticulturist at the University of Illinois Extension Service, Cook County. "Trees planted near a house not only help you save on utility bills but also contribute to energy conservation."

Air conditioners don't need to run as often if the sun doesn't beat down on your house all day, Fizzell explains. Shade trees partly shield the roof and keep the sun's rays off the walls in the morning and afternoon because twigs, branches, leaves, and trunk partly absorb and reflect the radiation. The amount of radiation that gets through depends on density of the tree's canopy.

For example, the canopy of a honey locust will transmit more radiation and thus give less shade than that of a burr oak of equal size. But the honey locust is a faster growing tree and is usually more popular with homeowners.

Large shade trees also provide refuge for people who wish to sit outdoors on a hot day, Fizzell adds. An actively growing tree transpires large quantities of moisture into the atmosphere. If the wind isn't blowing too strongly or if the trees are protected from winds by a shelter belt, this transpiration can result in increased humidity within the tree canopy. Since moist air doesn't heat as rapidly as dry air, this helps to keep temperatures under a tree moderate.

"August is a good time to think about where you will plant trees this fall," Fizzell says. "While you would be better off if someone had planted trees 20 years ago, you can still increase your comfort, and the value of your home with tree plantings now."

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## PESTS AFFECTING MAPLE TREES

The popular silver maple trees, so widely planted in this area are subject to two pests which are quite evident at this time of year. They are cottony maple scale and maple bladder gall.

Unightly red or green wart-like growths (galls) on the leaves are signs of infestation of bladder-gall mites. The mites overwinter on the bark of the trees and in early spring migrate to the leaves where they stimulate the formation of the galls. In each gall, many mites live and feed, protected from outside elements. It is doubtful if galls associated with these mites cause enough damage to justify spraying large trees.

Malathion, applied at the time the buds are swelling but before the leaves appear in spring, will give effective control.

Cottony maple scale is a common and injurious pest on soft maple and a variety of other trees, including such fruit trees as apple, pear, plum and peach. The infestations may be heavy enough to kill twigs, branches, limbs and occasionally, entire trees.

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