

Value Your Trees

By Dr. Joan Spalding

Trees as part of the landscaping can add from 15 to 25% to the value of a home. While you're planning on projects that need to be done to your house and garage, take some time to focus on your trees. Are you getting all the benefits from them that you want? Do they enhance the beauty of your home and provide you with privacy?

Plant in the Fall

Fall is a great time to plant trees. They have time to put down their roots before the hard winter freeze and are ready to absorb the moisture from the spring rains and summer heat that stimulate growth. The winter snows provide the spring moisture and when we have warm days the snow-melt gives the tree a start on spring growth.

Think of a tree you may purchase as a lifetime investment in your home. Native trees planted with the same soil composition as we have here in the foothills will adapt to being transplanted easier and will continue to grow and blend with the other native trees on your property. Other trees such as the deciduous trees are planted balled and burlapped with the proper care in planting will provide an accent to the native trees.

How to keep trees healthy

In the 24 years we have been planting and moving trees in the Evergreen area, we have learned many ways to make sure the tree stays healthy. First of all the location is important. The ground must be free from large rocks, broken up so the roots can penetrate the soil. Our tree spade digs a 5 foot hole, 8 feet wide and brings in 12,000 lbs of the native root-ball from the transplant site. If we are planting smaller trees that don't require the large spade we make sure the hole is also amended with quality dirt.

Once the tree is in the ground then the work begins to make sure it will have healthy growth. Large drip tubs are placed around the tree. A stimulant complex of 30 different organic ingredients are added to the water and they slowly work their way down to the tiny fingerling roots that promote growth. In addition, 12 -inch holes are placed in a pattern around the tree to receive organic pellets that release over a fifteen month time period. The cut roots are then inoculated with mychorizie, a naturally occurring fungal growth that masses the new roots.

Perhaps the most important factor in the demise of trees is inappropriate moisture. Roots can be drowned with too much, too fast or they can be shallow watered and slowly die. The key is to put in a drip system calculated to the species and size of the tree and used once a week or every four to five days when it is really hot. Our double ring emitter systems are placed at the cut line and halfway in between and always set up for the type of tree we are planting.

The process of making sure the tree will have healthy spring growth involves keeping the moisture in the ground. We use composted mulch that will not promote nitrogen deficiency. Four inches of mulch is placed over the irrigation system, a foot away from the trunk of the tree

to inhibit trunk rot and out to the drip line of the branches.

Plant for privacy

Another way to use trees and increase the value of your home is to plant mature trees for privacy. Perhaps a new house has been built next to yours. It may be possible to move a mature tree (up to 35 feet tall) so that it gives you more privacy. Or, adding a tree might be the answer to softening that view of your neighbor's house. Either may help to improve the beauty of your home.

Why cut them down

Cutting down trees is something we'd all rather avoid. Perhaps some trees that are close enough to be dangerous can be moved to a different location. If it is necessary to remove some trees, similar trees located further from buildings can possibly replace them. You may be able to both reduce fire danger and improve privacy at the same time.

Our job as professional tree arborists is to ensure the trees we plant and move are of the highest quality. The additional services we provide both for established trees and trees we plant will give your property value as you enjoy it now and when you decide to sell it.

Contact us for any consulting and tree needs you may have this fall. 303-526-1256

Learn more about our company at www.spaldingtrees.com or email us at: SpaldingTrees@aol.com