

## Choices, Choices

### This Spring, Select The Right Tree For Each Location

Selection of trees depends on the desired effect and the purpose trees will satisfy in the landscape. Will they attract birds to the area? Shade a patio? Screen an unsightly view? Enhance the view of the home? Identify an entrance or exit? Trees should provide contrast and relief from surrounding buildings and create seasonal interest in areas near the home.

#### What to consider when selecting a tree.

- Hardiness (ability of the plant to survive extremes of winter cold and summer heat)
- Mature height and spread
- Growth rate
- Cleanliness
- Type of root system
- Moisture and fertilizer requirements
- Space available
- Maintenance requirements
- Availability
- Ornamental effects, such as branching habit, texture and color of bark, flower, fruit and foliage
- Whether the trees is evergreen or deciduous

A local tree care company can help you determine which tree species both perform well in your local area and are suited to your desired planting site. Arborists often do a close analysis of the specific planting site to determine the susceptibility of resistance to environmental conditions such as:

- Disease and insect problems that may limit your selections
- The prior use of the planting site
- Soil conditions, such as poor drainage, and high or low pH
- The presence or absence of channelized winds
- The location of utilities above and below ground because their site conditions dictate plant choice and location
- The relationship of the plant to roads, walkways and security lighting

#### Is there enough space to plant a tree?

The space available at the specific site and mature tree size are important considerations and addressing these limits will go a long way toward reducing maintenance costs.

It is generally recommended not to plant trees that will grow 25 feet or taller under overhead power lines. Do not forget the underground utilities. Out of site does not mean that they will not have to be serviced at some point. Permanent plantings, such as trees, should be spaced to allow utility service. Ground-level utility structures, such as transformers and individual service connections, require space to be serviced. A minimum of 10 feet clearance after the tree has grown to maturity will help avoid any possible electrical hazards.

#### Where to plant?

Community ordinances may restrict planting of trees near power lines, parking strips, street lights, sewers, traffic control signs and signals, sidewalks and property lines. Municipalities may require planting permits for trees planted on city property. City codes often require that trees on city property be maintained by the city, so citizens planting on improper selection can cause problems for themselves for and the municipality.

