

Greetings:

The Tree Care Industry Association stresses the importance of tree care in modern urban, suburban, and rural living. Tree care is more than tree removal, it is also the preservation of trees by making them safer and healthier. This is done through general services such as pruning, fertilizing, and providing plant health care. Other services that help preserve trees are installing cabling and bracing systems, installing lightning protection systems, and providing consulting and protection for trees before and during construction. Tree care companies also provide other valuable services such as sales and delivery of firewood, mulch, and wood chips as well as stump removal.

Of course, tree care companies also transplant and install trees so that our urban and suburban landscapes continue to reap the benefits currently provided by trees (please see page 2 - Benefits of trees).

In order to provide these valuable services, tree care companies follow tested horticultural practices. These may include:

storage of wood chips = used as low-cost mulch for decorative landscaping uses, erosion control, construction damage prevention (prevents soil compaction), soil improvement (tilled into poor/compacted soils), tree preservation (control moisture/improve drought tolerance for trees), etc.

storage/seasoning of firewood = used as a low-cost renewable energy source

storage of loam = used during planting and transplanting

storage of mulch = used as a quality mulch for decorative landscaping uses, tree preservation (controls moisture/improves drought tolerance for trees), etc.

The Tree Care Industry Association, along with other associations such as the U.S. Composting Council, note that storage of “green” and “brown” materials (wood chips, mulch, loam, soil, leaves, clippings, branches and twigs, firewood) will not attract pest animals, such as raccoons, bats, rats, and mice.*

*Source: *U.S. Composting Council Fact Sheet / Home Composting: Recycling In Your Own Backyard*. Published by Lehigh County Office of Solid Waste Planning and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Benefits of trees:

The **Tree Care Industry Association** estimates that trees add 20 to 25 percent value to property as well as providing substantial benefits and monetary savings for communities. This page details some of the information we used to arrive at this conclusion.

Studies have shown that trees in urban and suburban areas provide many benefits to homeowners as well as state and local governments.

According to the **Journal of Arboriculture** caring for trees regularly is cost effective. Studies have demonstrated that it is actually cheaper to prune trees on a regular basis rather than neglecting them and cleaning up the resulting damage or dealing with an increase in liability lawsuits. That is why many cities have tree care crews or they contract with tree care companies to prune and care for trees regularly. Sources:

McPherson, E.G. 1994. "Benefits and costs of tree planting and care in Chicago."

McPherson, E.G.; Nowak, D.J.; Rowntree, R.A., Eds. "Chicago's Urban Forest."

McPherson, E.G.; Simpson, J.R.; Peper, P.J.; Xiao, Q. 1999. "Benefit-cost analysis of Modesto's municipal urban forest." *J. Arboric.* 25(5): 235-248.

Miller, R. W. and W. A. Sylvester. 1981. "An Economic Evaluation of the Pruning Cycle." *J. Arboric.* 7(4):109-112.

Yamamoto, S. T. 1985. "Programmed Tree Pruning and Public Liability." *J. Arbor.* 11(1):15-17.

According to the **Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers** *Guide to Plant Appraisal 9th Edition*, trees have value in the following ways:

Property valuation: U.S. Forest Service studies comparing tracts of land in Amherst, MA showed that forested land is valued 19% more than non-forested. Other studies have shown that real estate appraisers consistently appraised properties with trees at a higher value than property without trees. Appraisals can be as much as 27% higher due to the presence of trees.

Surveys of real estate agents by a national mortgage company have shown that 84% of agents feel a house on a lot with trees would be as much as 20% more salable than a house on a lot without trees.

Other benefits that add value and are calculated by plant appraisers:

Aesthetic value

Screening/privacy

Wind control (wind breaks, heating savings)

Sun control (shading, air conditioning savings)

Erosion control (sediment/drainage control savings)

Studies by done by the **American Forests** organization in the Delaware Valley region of PA found that even moderate decreases in the urban/suburban forest canopy (1.5% of

dense forests, 10 percent of medium forests, and 14% of thin forests) translated to large monetary losses. According to American Forests, this is because trees slow storm water runoff, reducing peak flows and decreasing the amount of storm water storage needed.

With the decline in tree cover, the Delaware Valley's urban forest lost the ability to detain almost 53 million cubic feet of storm water, a service valued at \$105 million. This represents the cost to build storm water retention ponds and other engineered systems to intercept this runoff. The region stored 2.9 billion cubic feet of storm water in 2000, valued at \$5.9 billion. Storm water costs were calculated for a typical 2-year peak storm event and a \$2.50 per cubic foot construction costs for the storm water retention ponds.

American Forests also notes other benefits of trees, such as pollution control. According to American Forests, trees improve air quality by removing nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O₃), and particulate matter 10 microns or less (PM₁₀) in size.

In the case study of the Delaware Valley, the tree canopy lost its ability to remove approximately 1.7 million pounds of air pollutants annually, at a value of \$3.9 million per year. In 2000, the region's trees removed 73 million lbs. valued at \$167 million.

According to American Forests, another way trees help clean the air is by storing and sequestering carbon in the wood. Total storage and the rate at which carbon is stored (sequestration) can be measured.

In the case study of the Delaware Valley, if the region's trees had not declined since 1985, they would have stored an additional 633,000 tons of carbon and sequestered an additional 1,373 tons annually. In 2000, the region's urban forest stored 26.8 million tons of carbon and sequestered 8,585 tons per year.

We at the Tree Care Industry Association hope all will value trees and the companies that help preserve them so that future generations will be able to enjoy the same natural resources and healthy communities that we enjoy today.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bob Rouse
Director of Accreditation
Tree Care Industry Association