

TREES: NATURE'S PROTECTORS

Trees are a natural stabilizer and filtration system for our streams and rivers. A riparian (streamside) buffer helps filter sediment runoff and stabilize eroding banks. Mature trees shade the water, lowering water temperatures, provide leaf litter and woody debris, improving the aquatic habitat. Trees also improve water quality by absorbing excess nutrients.

Streamside buffers of trees and shrubs should be planted a minimum of 3-5' wide, beginning at the top of the stream bank. The wider the buffer, the more protection it provides the stream.

On the human side, homes, buildings, and recreation areas can be insulated and protected by planting trees. Studies have found a 15 to 35 percent savings in energy with a properly placed windbreak. Coniferous trees are one of the best and cheapest sources of protection .

Windbreaks placed on the prevailing windward side will cut and divert the force of the wind. A well-established windbreak can provide protection to an area ten times the height of the trees.

Windbreaks range from one to five rows of trees depending upon available space, with the first row a minimum of 100 feet from the protected building to prevent snow

accumulation on sidewalks and driveways. Trees should be planted 8-10 feet apart (closer with only one row), with 10-15 feet between rows. Alternate rows (-_ _ _ -) leaving no large gaps. Taller trees will be placed nearest the site or building; trees should be shorter with each consecutive row. The objective is to create a wedge which will deflect the wind up and over.

Whether your goal is to reduce your energy bills with a windbreak, control erosion and sediment runoff, enhance or create wildlife habitat, grow Christmas trees, or increase privacy with screening, trees will protect and enhance your home and natural resources for years to come.

The Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District will be offering a wide variety of bare root seedlings and transplants at reasonable prices through their annual Tree and Shrub Program.

Orders must be prepaid by March 12 and picked up at the Walton office on Saturday, April 10. Stock is limited, so order early.

Order forms with species descriptions, sizes and prices are available at www.dcswcd.org or call the SWCD office at 44 West Street in Walton at 865-7161

Delaware County Times
March 5, 2010