

Save Energy by Turning to Mother Nature

A few improvements can be concentrated outdoors this season. While homeowners are cleaning up the property or inspecting their home's exterior, they may want to consider adding some trees and shrubbery that can save them money down the line.

Most individuals are tightening their belts and watching spending these days. High numbers of layoffs and increasing unemployment numbers are indicative of troubled times. But while income has decreased, the cost of living certainly has not. Energy costs still remain high, and many homeowners are looking for ways to cut spending any way they can around the home.

There is something relatively easy homeowners can do to reduce the financial burden of energy costs — get planting. Choosing the right types of trees and shrubs can offset heating and cooling costs all year long.

Just think how a towering shade tree dramatically cools an area when the sun is high in the sky and can be a welcome solace on a hot day. A hedge of thick evergreen bushes may serve as a windblock when the weather is blustery. Incorporating these elements into a landscape can be a natural and inexpensive way to cut costs.

Before planting, homeowners should first answer a few questions.

- What direction does my house face?
- What areas of the house have the most windows?
- What climate do I live in? Are four seasons experienced?
- What is my planting "zone"?

- Are there any rules and regulations regarding planting shrubbery or trees around my home?

Answering these questions can help homeowners decide on what plants will be right for their home needs. For example, individuals who live in primarily hot climates should understand that nearly 75 percent of all solar heat gain in a building comes through windows. Therefore, shading the south- and west-facing windows of the home with trees can dramatically reduce reliance on cooling systems. Keeping an air conditioner unit shaded can also improve its efficiency.

Homeowners who experience the highs and lows of all seasons will want to consider deciduous trees. These are trees that lose their leaves in cold weather. Deciduous trees will block the sun during the summer, but then let the light in the winter to warm up the interior.

If a home is routinely under attack by blustery winds, thick shrubs planted for windbreaking are ideal. These include firs and junipers, and other evergreens. They should be planted perpendicular to the winds for maximum blockage. Shrubs planted on the northeast side of the home may protect the home from storms that tend to roll in from this direction. Do not plant evergreens where sunlight is desired, otherwise the thermostat may need to be turned up to compensate.

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oldcolony.com

Charleston 3102 Virginia Avenue, SE 2:00-4:00 PM
\$225,000, 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Yvonne Stamper
304.437.4343 oldcolony.com/126514.ad

Charleston 28 Ridgeview 2:00-4:00 PM
\$209,900, 4 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Denise Stricklen
304.549.8228 oldcolony.com/128472.ad

Charleston 1507 Dogwood 2:00-4:00 PM
\$269,000, 5 Bedrooms, 2F/2H Baths, JD Stump
304.741.0337 oldcolony.com/123291.ad

Charleston 11 Cook Drive 2:00-4:00 PM
\$325,000, 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Lida Widdecombe
304.545.2373 oldcolony.com/126484.ad

Charleston 1524 Clark Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$149,900, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Marlein Habash
304.610.4523 oldcolony.com/124467.ad

Charleston 7 Staehlin Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$329,900, 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Margo Teeter
304.419.1919 oldcolony.com/125173.ad

Charleston 1553 Mt. Vernon 2:00-4:00 PM
\$409,900, 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Baths, Margo Teeter
304.419.1919 oldcolony.com/128839.ad

Charleston 1876 Ellette Place 2:00-4:00 PM
\$259,000, 3 Bedrooms, 4 Baths, Jazkie Zakaiab
304.545.0488 oldcolony.com/127425.ad

Charleston 1141 Emerald Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$159,900, 3 Bedrooms, 1.5 Baths, Ben Moore
304.206.8912 oldcolony.com/127711.ad

Charleston 1528 Hampton Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$23,900, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Kim Brown
304.545.3087 oldcolony.com/128511.ad

Charleston 1127 Lyndale Drive 2:00-4:00 PM
\$159,900, 3 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, Tracy Ferguson
304.550.4811 oldcolony.com/127744.ad

Charleston 1506 Brentwood Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$239,900, 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Asha Bachhawat
304.421.0848 oldcolony.com/128928.ad

Charleston 1410 Somerlayton 2:00-4:00 PM
\$259,000, 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Vickie
McLaughlin 304.415.0366 oldcolony.com/125402.ad

Charleston 19 Birchtree 2:00-4:00 PM
\$219,000, 2 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Nancy Hitchman
304.546.9990 oldcolony.com/128268.ad

South Charleston 12 Ballard 2:00-4:00 PM
\$64,900, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Warren Danzer
304.343.5009 oldcolony.com/128931.ad

South Charleston 21 Creekstone 2:00-4:00 PM
\$386,700, 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Addy Summers
304.542.5976 oldcolony.com/128758.ad

South Charleston 6 Coventry Woods 2:00-4:00 PM
\$699,000, 4 Bedroom, 5.5 Baths, Helen Hopkins
304.610.1113 oldcolony.com/125785.ad

Cross Lanes 4 Raleigh Place 2:00-4:00 PM
\$219,000, 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Rick Whitten
304.549.1088 oldcolony.com/128088.ad

Cross Lanes 5404 Embassy Drive 2:00-4:00 PM
\$149,900, 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath, Tina Ranson
304.881.6417 oldcolony.com/128873.ad

Cross Lanes 5205 Blue Ridge 2:00-4:00 PM
\$309,900, 6 Bedrooms, 3F/3H Baths, Wanda
Robertson 304.552.2210 oldcolony.com/122897.ad

St. Albans 2818 Walk Drive 2:00-4:00 PM
\$289,900, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Joe Pacifico
304.741.3595 oldcolony.com/128627.ad

St. Albans 2129 Grant Avenue 2:00-4:00 PM
\$119,000, 3 Bedrooms, 1.5 Baths, Duck Underwood
304.437.4834 oldcolony.com/128164.ad

Nitro 1407 Sattes Circle 2:00-4:00 PM
\$115,000, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Sara Vyskocil
304.377.2870 oldcolony.com/128936.ad

Poca 39 Janette 2:00-4:00 PM
\$171,000, 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Brenda
Thompson 304.421.3601 oldcolony.com/128450.ad

Winfield 380 Blue Lick Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$285,000, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Betty Corsaro
304.542.2575 oldcolony.com/128806.ad

Fraziers Bottom 48 Fieldstone 2:00-4:00 PM
\$218,900, 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Drew Whitten
304.553.4977 oldcolony.com/128200.ad

Eleanor 238 Northwoods 2:00-4:00 PM
\$269,500, 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Denise Williams
304.552.4626 oldcolony.com/128616.ad

Scott Depot 107 White Cedar 2:00-4:00 PM
\$224,900, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Morgan Johnson
304.419.3664 oldcolony.com/128255.ad

Scott Depot 29 Michael Street 2:00-4:00 PM
\$189,000, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Lisa Eden
304.415.1171 oldcolony.com/128318.ad

Scott Depot 705 Poinsettia 2:00-4:00 PM
\$374,500, 5 Bedrooms, 3.5 Baths, Carrie Winter
304.380.6091 oldcolony.com/127956.ad

Hurricane 113 Piedmont 2:00-4:00 PM
\$199,900, 5 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Georgeann
Underwood 304.610.9952 oldcolony.com/127191.ad

Hurricane 1049 Crestmont Road 2:00-4:00 PM
\$925,000, 8 Bedrooms, 4F/2H Baths, Ava Crum
304.437.1256 oldcolony.com/128291.ad

Hurricane 1014 Saint Ives 2:00-5:00 PM
\$319,500, 4 Bedrooms, 4 Baths, Carol Converse
304.541.7048 oldcolony.com/128567.ad

Hurricane 19 Poplar Hills 2:00-4:00 PM
\$169,500, 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, Deenee Coolen
304.550.3990 oldcolony.com/128562.ad

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