



BY AMY WAKAGAWA, OWNER

# The BENEFITS of *healthy* trees

**D**oes money really grow on trees? It is very difficult to say no to this question with the many benefits of trees. Along with benefits that can save you money, there is an environmental necessity for healthy trees to exist.

From the forests to our landscaped urban areas there are substantial benefits that greatly impact everyone on this planet. Our forests produce nearly as much oxygen as the carbon dioxide they absorb. This recycling fulfills the annual oxygen needs of 18 people per one acre of forest. The Forest Service did the research to attach a value to a single tree. In 50 years, a single tree can generate \$30,000 in oxygen and remove \$60,000 of air pollution. That one tree will also recycle \$35,000 of water from the absorption and evaporation that occurs. The moist leaves also filter particles from the air on top of the harmful gases that are removed. The ability to recycle the greenhouse wastes, which are abundantly produced in our cities, is greatly impacted by the number of trees located in each city. The average lifespan of a tree in a metropolitan area is eight years. At that point the tree hasn't even reached its most productive stage of carbon stor-



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age, which is 10 years. Do your trees seem more important than ever?

Trees can provide perks to your property that can be significant. It is not uncommon to have a mature tree with an assessed value of \$10,000. Smart and efficient landscaping can increase property value as much as 20%. Landscaping can also provide protection from wind, sun and precipitation. Shade trees can reduce the temperature in a building up to 20 degrees. Most would assume trees provide a greater impact in the summer months, but that's not always the case. The Forest Service estimates a savings of up to 30% in air conditioning costs and 50% for heat. Trees provide food and habitat for wildlife as well so we can all enjoy its presence. The benefits don't stop at ground level though. The root systems improve water quality by slowing and filtering rain water. Tree roots also stabilize soil and prevent erosion from occurring. In some areas trees can even prevent flooding. Almost all of the benefits of trees seem to have some kind of monetary link.

Trees can help clean the air, save on utility bills, increase property value, provide protection, and even produce fruit after all of that! Trees are a growing asset to your property and maintenance is crucial for long term health, safety and aesthetic appeal. An investment in your existing trees, and possibly new trees, may not make them start growing money but could definitely be considered a sound investment with proven returns.