

## LANDSCAPING TRICKS FOR SAVING ENERGY

**L**andscaping for energy efficiency is smart and time tested. With basic technology and resources, primitive societies designed homes that stayed comfortable even in hostile climates by using smart landscaping.

Today, energy-efficient landscaping can help lower utility bills. Apps and websites can help design various planting schemes to maximize energy savings. While insulation, argon gas filled windows, and heat pumps are smart investments, they can be complemented by landscaping; one of the most basic methods of conserving energy.

We live in the temperate climate region where the weather varies greatly; therefore, we must design for both extremes. During

winter the goal is to keep heat in and cold out by blocking wind and enabling sunlight to penetrate the home. The goal for summer is to temper the heat by shading the sun and creating cooling breezes. A well-planned and landscaped property can do both.

First, give the highest priority to planting shade trees due west of west-facing windows. Second, plant shade trees due east of east facing windows. Contrary to common thought, the least effective place for a tree is to the south of the house. The reason is that in the summer, at midday, the shade will fall under the tree instead of on the house and in winter the shade will fall on the house, preventing the sun's



Energy Services Advisor Robert Talton

heat from warming the home. Carefully plan your landscaping project in order to maximize the benefits of your landscaping. Wisely positioned trees can reduce a home's energy use by up to 25 percent.

Energy efficient landscaping can increase the comfort of your home and maximize the energy efficiency

of heating and cooling systems. On average, a well-designed landscape plan provides enough savings to allow an eight-year payback. Shading of an air conditioner can increase its efficiency by 10 percent. For more information on energy efficient landscaping visit [energy.gov/energysaver/landscaping-energy-efficient-homes](http://energy.gov/energysaver/landscaping-energy-efficient-homes).

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PO Box 931  
Dunn, NC 28335  
(910) 892-8071  
800-338-5530  
[www.sremc.com](http://www.sremc.com)