

Thinking about Planting

Planting new trees and shrubs enhances your enjoyment and property value, as well as contributing crucially to the ecology of urban areas where trees die off more quickly than they are replaced. Nevertheless, without a long term perspective, homeowners often plant the wrong tree in the wrong place and cause themselves serious problems.

Many trees will spread their branches as far horizontally as they grow vertically, and their roots considerably farther. What you plant for a "quick screen" this year will affect your light, safety, sewer and power lines, yard maintenance and neighbors for many years to come. You might want to schedule a consultation to aid you in sorting through the complexities involved in choosing a planting site.

Knowing about the growth patterns of different trees can help you make wise planting choices instead of costly mistakes. You may, for example, have a diseased, dangerous, or overly large Eucalyptus or Monterey Pine growing close to your house. If it needs to be removed, consider replacing it with a native like Live Oak, Wax Myrtle, or Toyon, or a drought-tolerant non-native such as Fruitless Olive, Pepper Tree, or Pineapple Guava. These trees grow more slowly, but need so much less water, safety thinning, and pruning - both for view restoration and for size reduction - that you may well feel compensated for your patience.