



Trees

Preserve Our Natural Resource

Trees play a vital role in our community's scenic beauty, the character of our local landscape and overall quality of the environment.

Together, the Borough of Watchung and the Watchung Environmental Commission support sound policies and regulations that protect the environment and economic benefits of trees. The Borough's Tree and Tree Preservation ordinance addresses the protection and preservation of trees.

With this commitment to the environment, the ordinance identifies and monitors the indiscriminate, uncontrolled and excessive destruction, removal and cutting of trees. This requires that no person shall cut, remove, injure or damage any tree without having first obtain the required tree removal permit. To obtain a permit and receive a detailed copy of the tree ordinance, contact the Borough Engineer.

Benefits of Protecting Our Community's Trees

Trees provide a variety of aesthetic and environmental values including screening unpleasant odors, absorption of noise, reduction of pollution and temperature and erosion.

Environmental Benefits

Air Quality

Trees are an efficient and cost-effective way to improve air quality and reduce pollution. A mature tree absorbs between 120 – 240 pounds per year of small particles and gases, like carbon dioxide, which are released into the air by automobiles and industrial facilities. In addition, a single tree produces nearly three-quarters of the oxygen required for one person; and a canopy of trees in an urban environment can slash smog levels up to six percent.

Water Quality

Trees help anchor soil and reduce storm water runoff, saving the high costs of drainage ditches, storm sewers, and other "engineering solutions" to storm water management. Reducing runoff also decreases topsoil erosion and the amount of silt and other pollutants washed into streams, rivers and lakes.

Reduced Noise Pollution

Noises pollution is an often-overlooked problem. Excessive or unwanted sound has negative physical and psychological effects. Noise can come from many sources, especially roads and highways. Trees can play an important role in deadening unwanted noise. A tree's leaves, branches and twigs absorb sound waves.

Economic Benefits

Lower Heating and Cooling Costs

Trees have demonstrated the ability to reduce heating and cooling costs and counteract the "heat island" effect in urban environments. Areas with little vegetation can experience temperatures of up to seven degrees higher than those with tree cover. This translates into significant high-energy costs to cool your home. Properly planted trees can cut heating and cooling costs by as much as 12 percent and reduce overall power demand.

Greater Residential Property Values

Studies have consistently shown that trees have a major impact on the price and desirability of homes. Among identical homes, those with trees sell for an average of five percent more than homes without trees. Property value of

unimproved lots can rise as much as 30 percent based on the amount of density of tree cover.

Higher Commercial Land Values and Occupancy Rates

Trees have a positive impact on the value of commercial property. Recent surveys indicate that nine out of 10 commercial real estate appraisers believe that trees boost the sales appeal of commercial properties and add significantly to their value. In addition, commercial areas with trees enjoy higher occupancy and rental/lease rates than identical properties that lack landscaping.

Increase Consumer Patronage and Spending

The appearance of a business can attract or repel a customer. Well-landscaped businesses project an image of quality and service that entices customers. Surveys show that three out of four consumers prefer to shop in places that are graced by trees and other forms of landscaping.

Health Benefits

There is mounting evidence that stress and noise have an impact on your physical and psychological health. Trees and vegetation can affect our mood and help relieve stress. Research is showing that trees have a restorative quality that helps people feel and function better.

Studies on driving and road-related stress have shown that drivers exposed to nature are less likely to have a negative response to stressful situations than those that were not exposed to nature.

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The importance of trees to our quality of life requires that we protect them. Property owners have a major responsibility to care for and maintain their trees.

For more information on the Tree Preservation Ordinance and to obtain a tree removal permit, contact:

The Watchung Environmental
Commission or
The Borough Engineer
15 Mountain Boulevard
Watchung, NJ 07069
(908) 756 – 0080
watboro@bellatlantic.net

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Resources:

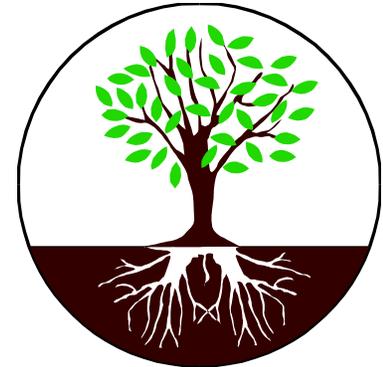
Tree Conservation Ordinances: Land-use Regulations Go Green. 1993. Christopher Duerksen APA and Scenic America.

Urban Forest Values: Economic Benefits of Trees in Cities. 1999. The Center for Urban Horticulture.

Urban Nature Benefits: Psycho-Social Dimension of People and Plants. 1999. The Center for Urban Horticulture.

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Watchung's Commitment To Tree Preservation

*Prepared & distributed by
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