PROPER LANDSCAPING CAN SAVE YOU MONEY

After you have bought the new home of your dreams from your builder, you will probably immediately start thinking about personal decorating touches that you can add. When considering these personal touches, don't think just about the interior of the house.

The landscaping around it will also be very important. Trees can affect everything from your heating and cooling bills to your resale value — some surveys have put this increased value in the range of 10 to 15 percent. Trees can produce shade, food, firewood or just a beautiful scene. They can also attract birds and other wildlife.

- **Before planting trees, it is important to choose species that will thrive under local conditions. For instance, in areas with high temperatures and little water, plant trees that are drought tolerant. In areas with high rainfall, try to plant trees that demand large amounts of moisture. By planting trees that grow naturally in your area, you can be pretty sure they will be successful. Consult a local nursery for suggestions on trees that will thrive where you live.**
- **Location on your property is another important consideration. Choose spots with adequate sunlight and water, and make sure the trees are protected from possible pests. A mesh fence can do much to prevent animals from injuring your saplings. Try to estimate how long the tree will take to become fully grown and what the tree will look like at full size.**
- **Trees are most vulnerable in their first years of life and should be tended with special care. Newly planted trees should be watered deeply and on a regular basis. Allowing a hose to drip at the base of a tree for several hours will permit the water to soak deep into the soil and encourage deep rooting. This will give the tree a better chance of surviving drought.**
- **Many personal decisions go into tree planting. In areas with hot summers and cold winters it is best to plant deciduous trees. These trees will provide shade in the summer but will allow desired sunlight to pass through in the colder months. Some trees are better than others for providing a buffer against noise and unwanted views. Also, personal expectations should be considered.** *SOURCE: NAHB*