

# gardening

## WINDBREAKS

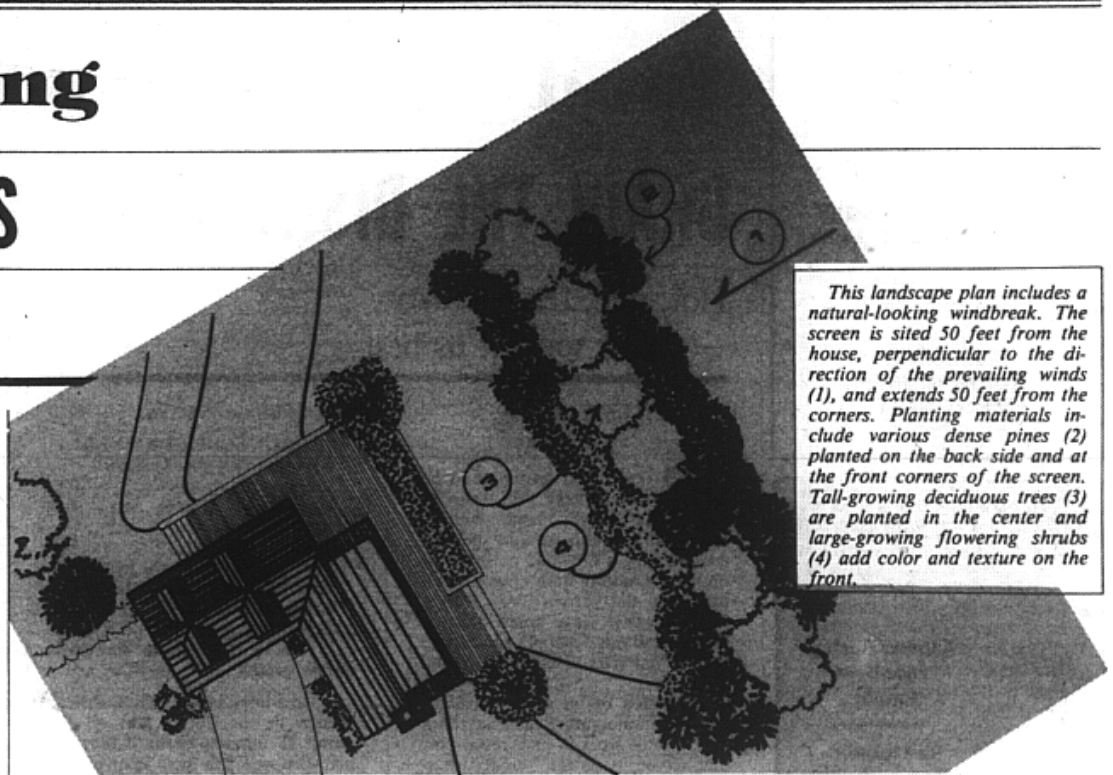
Fighting energy loss with nature.

By Pat Leuchtman  
leisure Columnist

Everyone is concerned about the cost of heating homes; the price of oil is skyrocketing and promises to continue. If you are heating with wood, a lot of sweat goes into the effort to put away a sufficient supply and you want to conserve as much heat as possible. Insulate your walls, by all means, but also remember that you can insulate your house from the outside as well.

Houses lose much more heat on a cold windy day than they do on a cold still day. This principle is easy to understand when we remember how cooling summer breezes are on a hot summer day. The breezes — or winds — carry off heat quickly. One of the objects of landscaping around your house could be to reduce the wind. This can be done with plantings called windbreaks or shelterbelts.

A windbreak should be carefully planned before it is planted and certain things should be kept in mind. First you must establish the direc-



This landscape plan includes a natural-looking windbreak. The screen is sited 50 feet from the house, perpendicular to the direction of the prevailing winds (1), and extends 50 feet from the corners. Planting materials include various dense pines (2) planted on the back side and at the front corners of the screen. Tall-growing deciduous trees (3) are planted in the center and large-growing flowering shrubs (4) add color and texture on the front.

rushing around the ends of the windbreak and blast into your front yard.

A windbreak can be as small as a hedge around your property or it can be 30 feet or more wide, consisting of several staggered rows of different kinds of trees and shrubs. Your own situation will help you determine exactly how much and what kind of a windbreak you will need.

Many trees will take five or 10

in lots of 25 to 500; delivery is expected around the third weekend in April. These seedlings are inexpensive and you can get more information about the program by contacting the Extension Service at the County Courthouse.

I am in the midst of planning two windbreaks for my property. One is to keep the snow from drifting onto the long drive that leads up to the house. That drive is famous for the drifts it can collect in the winter. About 60 feet or so back from the road I'll be planting at least two staggered rows of Scotch Pine, larch and autumn olive. These are all fast growing plants that will tolerate a wide range of soil conditions. I hope this planting will be effectively catching the snow in about two or three years.

I am also planning a windbreak to shelter the house. This will take longer to establish and be effective and it will also be larger. We have very strong northwesterly winds that come down our hill and blast the house so I think a five row windbreak will be best here. The middle row will contain the tallest trees, possibly deciduous, with faster growing and denser evergreens on either side.

I am also going to start a nursery bed this year. I will plant evergreen seedlings that I will use later as foundation plantings. Seedlings are very small, but if I tend them for a couple of years while I do repair work on the foundation, they should be a respectable size when I am ready to place them around the house, especially along our north wall.

Foundation plantings also help prevent heat loss from the house by creating an insulating dead air space right next to the house.

Energy conservation plantings can help you during cold windy winters, but when landscaping it is good to remember that old carpentry

maxim, "measure twice and cut once," except in this case you have to plan twice and plant once. Planting is always the key.

Besides being practical, windbreaks are also beautiful to look at during any season of the year and they can provide food and shelter for flocks of songbirds. That's quite a lot to get from a few trees.

The following information is provided by the Franklin County Extension Service:

### Now is the time to:

- bring hyacinths (which were potted in October) indoors for forcing into bloom.
- start amaryllis bulbs now.
- sow seeds of wax begonia (*Begonia Semperflorens*).
- test any leftover seeds from last year.
- watch for firewood pests.

### Note:

- Continue to apply wood ashes on your garden except where potatoes will be grown.
- Order seeds early. □

Garden Calendar



tion of the prevailing winds and plant your trees at a right angle to that wind.

Second, the leeward side of the windbreak should be at least 50 or 60 feet away from the buildings you want to shelter. Also, remember to extend the windbreak for 50 feet on either end of the sheltered buildings. You don't want the wind to come

years to be really effective as a windbreak so consider planting faster growing shrubs or trees as part of your windbreak or as a temporary planting that you can remove later.

This spring the Franklin Conservation District is offering two to three year old seedlings of 14 different types of trees for sale. They are 10-12 inches high and can be bought

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