

# Environmental landscape management saves energy

(AP) — Proper placement of shade trees around your home can reduce air-conditioning costs by more than 30 percent, a University of Florida urban horticulturist says.

Depending on temperature variations, almost as much as a half of a state's residential energy use goes toward cooling the home during the long, hot summer, said Robert J. Black of UF's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

In addition, escalating utility rates makes the concept known as Environmental Landscape Management sensible for everybody, he said.

The program encourages homeowners to select trees and planting sites that conserve energy by using appropriate landscape design practices. Matching the correct type of tree to the proper location to achieve the desired effect is one goal of the program.

Trees modify local climate extremes by providing shade, insulating the home from heat gain or loss and cooling the air which surrounds their leaves, Black said.

And once established, trees require little maintenance and increase your home's value.

"Before central heating and air-conditioning, homes were designed and built to take advantage of environmental features," Black said. "Today passive methods of climate control are once again of interest, and new information has substantially improved many energy-saving concepts from the past."

The correct placement of trees chosen for shade involves considering the mature height of the tree, the angle of the sun's rays and the height of the structure to be shaded, he said.

Realistically, sidewalks are the most practical structures of the house to shade, because it takes many years for newly planted trees to shade the roof.

The benefits of new shade trees should be felt within five years, if the trees are planted seven to 20 feet from the sidewalk, depending on each tree's ultimate height and on the size of the lot.

## Steve Thomas at BASM program

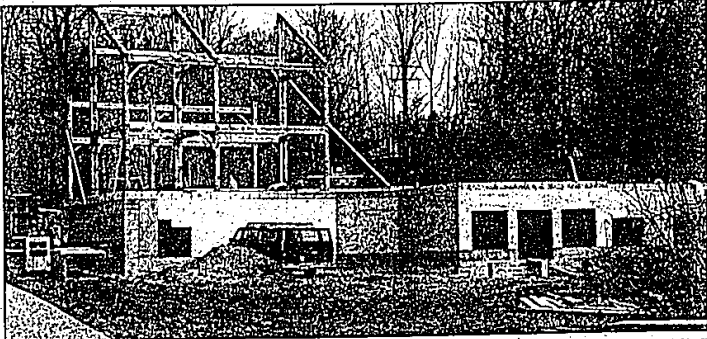
Steve Thomas, host of "This Old House," will discuss the origins of the show and a preview of future program projects when he addresses the general membership meeting of the Builders' Association of Southeastern Michigan 6-9 p.m. Thursday, May 21, at the Somerset Inn, 2601 W. Big Beaver.

The BASM New Generation Council will host

Paul Williams from Milliken Millworks who will discuss BOCA codes and what builders should know before building a house. How stairs and decorative molding can accentuate a house will be included.

The seminar will be 8:30-11 p.m. Thursday, June 4, at the Somerset Inn.

To register, call 737-4477.



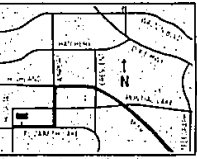
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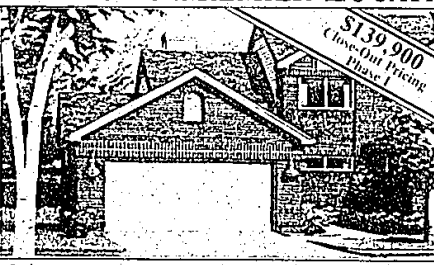
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