

Planning a Windbreak

If you want to plan your own windbreak, below are some general tips to follow:

Tips On Planting Tree Rows

An average planting by the Conservation District consists of at least three rows to achieve good wind protection. A typical planting consists of shrubs or shorter trees comprising the outer rows, while evergreens (the foundation of the windbreak) should make up at least one inside row. Your tallest trees should be in the inside row(s.)

You should not make all your tree rows the same species (i.e. three rows of juniper.) This will help protect your windbreak in the event of a disease or insect destroying all of one species.

Planting different types of trees in the same row can create gaps and reduce windbreak effectiveness.

Spacing Within and Between Rows

The District suggests the following tree spacing distances to use when planting trees and shrubs in a row. Windbreak rows should be planted 20 feet apart. Always leave enough distance between rows and around your windbreak to allow cultivating equipment passage.

Suggested Tree Spacing:

- *Shrubs (i.e: Caragana, Lilac, Cotoneaster, Buffaloberry, Native Plum, Chokecherry)* – Plant 4-6 feet apart
- *Smaller Evergreen Species (i.e: Rocky Mountain Juniper, Eastern Redcedar)* – Plant 6-10 feet apart
- *Large Evergreen Species (i.e: Pine and Spruce)* – Plant 10-12 feet apart
- *Deciduous Trees (i.e., Bur Oak, Green Ash, Hackberry, Golden Willow, Siberian Elm, Cottonwood)* – Plant 12-16 feet apart

Remember that the above spacing recommendations are simply guidelines, depending on how you want to utilize your planting. For example: for a windbreak, trees will be spaced closer, whereas trees in a wildlife planting are spaced a little farther apart. If you have questions, please call the District for further information.

Checklist For Preparing Your Planting Site

Proper site preparation is very important for windbreaks. Plows, disks, or rototillers can be used to achieve necessary tillage and are available at rental equipment stores and landscape companies. The District also has a list of contractors who do site preparation work. Please call 772-2600 to receive a copy of this list. Following the fall before planting is essential for dry land windbreaks to allow moisture to accumulate during the winter. Rows should be 8 feet wide and 8 inches or deeper.