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"Be the reason someone smiles today." ~Roy T. Bennett

As we close out 2020, I think about how the year has left permanent impressions on all of us. Undoubtedly, the pandemic has placed us all in the storm one way or another. Some who read this have already recovered from COVID-19 — and that's great — but please remember others who are less fortunate and did not do as well.

It can be tough out there. Running a company of any size has not gotten any easier—it's a load of serious responsibility. That said, most contractors in all categories I have spoken with report having stronger sales than previous years, despite the pandemic. This is really difficult for me to get a handle on, as I was really thinking the opposite would happen. Don't take me wrong, I'm happy to hear about the success stories and how good some people have had it. What I'm driving at here is the incongruity of being incredibly grateful and feeling embarrassed at the same time. It's hard for me to relish such successes while knowing that so much terrible is happening daily.

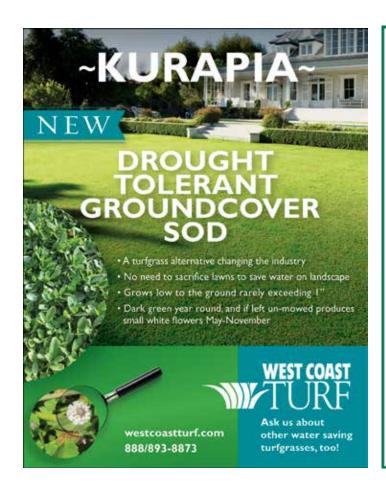
Now as I write this, I feel compelled to think of those less fortunate: workers or companies whose work has

gone away due to the pandemic and its merciless effects, both medical and economic. Something really bothers me about it being the holidays and knowing not all are doing so well. I mean, I'm as competitive as most of us, but mostly prefer to compete against my weaker sides and not against other people; seeing all the people in line at food banks is terrible.

Initially, I was inclined to think there's not much I could do to make a difference. But when I saw the quote (referenced at the beginning of this message), I realized there's tons I can do: it's as simple as being helpful where and when I see fellow people struggling. That's it. It means really engaging when someone is in need. It does not mean I'm wasting time or dare I say, money. It means momentarily leaving my self-interests behind and placing a higher good above myself.

There's tons we can all do and there is no better time than now. Please take this for its goodwill intent and challenge yourselves to help make someone's day a little better. Hope to see you all soon.

May you have the very best and happiest holidays ever! ~Willie





NALP Offering OSHA 10-Hour Construction Safety Course

The landscape construction and lawn care industry has its fair share of risks when it comes to injuries and illnesses. Safety training helps build awareness to recognize and prevent hazards on the job site. One form of safety training available for you and your crews is the OSHA 10-Hour Construction Safety Course for the Landscape Industry, offered by NALP.

According to NALP's safety adviser Sam Steel, they customized the original OSHA model and got it approved by the OSHA education center. Now they've got a program that's very customized to the hazards and risks that impact green industry workers and employees.

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Industry-Focused Course

This 10-hour course follows the construction industry OSHA standards, but focuses on landscape-related topics such as the operation of zero-turn mowers, woodchippers and chain saws. The program is designed to cater to the hazards that landscapers in different regions have to deal with.

Setting a Safety Baseline

The course includes an introduction to the OSHA standards, fall prevention, struck-by hazards, caught-in and between hazards, electrical hazards, chemicals in the workplace, personal protective equipment, power tools and equipment, health hazards in landscaping, excavation safety, material handling and miscellaneous safety hazards.

According to Steel, one of the top 10 cited hazards OSHA writes citations for involves flying debris. These have a first-time fine that is close to \$14,000 per fine. He stresses that a whole list of citations and \$40,000 or \$50,000 in fines can easily ruin a small to mediumsized business.

This OSHA 10-hour course serves as a nice base for safety training and should supplement your existing safety program.

Continued on next page...

Mrs. Smith just noticed puddling and wants new drainage... by the weekend.

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NALP Offering OSHA 10-Hour Construction Safety Course

...Continued from previous page

"We don't want the firms to use just this safety training alone," Steel. "It's the guidelines for all the safety training that you do and you want to make sure what you're doing is successful."

Benefits of Being OSHA Certified

Steel says companies should highlight the fact their staff has been OSHA 10 certified.

Those who complete the course earn a 10-Hour Construction completion card and a certificate from NALP along with 10 Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

Everyone from field employees to owners can benefit from attending.

Due to COVID-19, the course is currently offered online via Zoom. There is an upcoming course on January 19-20, 2021, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. PST.

Interested in attending an OSHA 10 Course? Contact Valerie Shuford at (703) 456-4201 or email to valerie@ landscapeprofessionals.org with questions.

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Safety Matters: Using Small Equipment Safely in Landscaping

Helpful safety tips provided by CLCA Insurance Solutions License 0172721

Lawn mowers, chain saws, leaf blowers, trimming equipment and grinders are all examples of small equipment used in landscaping. This equipment can cause injuries if it is not used properly. Common landscaping injuries include:

- Cuts, lacerations, or amputations from fast-moving mower blades
- Bruises or broken bones from flying objects
- Burns from hot equipment parts
- Electrical shock from faulty grounding or defective electrical cords
- Back strain from improper equipment usage
- Slips, trips, and falls

To avoid injuries when using small equipment while landscaping, follow these guidelines from OSHA and

the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) Alliance.

- Read and understand the operator's manual for the equipment you're using.
- If you have not been trained on a piece of equipment, do not use it! This is critical to your safety.
- Make sure all safety guards are in place and the equipment is in good working order. Do not alter or remove safety guards.
- Always wear the recommended personal protective equipment (PPE). Eye and ear protection are especially important.
- Clothing should fit well and be free of dangling or ragged edges that can become tangled in controls or fast-moving parts.
- Don't use equipment when someone walks by. Aim blowers

- away from cars, people, and houses. Flying debris can cause injuries.
- Don't operate small equipment when it's dark and you have limited visibility.
- Turn off equipment when it's not in use.
- Allow equipment to cool off before refueling.
- Never smoke when fueling a piece of equipment.
- Disconnect spark plug wires before performing maintenance.
- Keep your hands on the handles of all hedge trimmers and do not reach up into plants to clear debris until trimmers are shut off.
- Keep hands and feet away from mower chutes and blades.
- When using chain saws, make sure the chain brake works and the chain tension is correct.

San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

Congratulations to the following companies for reaching membership milestones this month.

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CLCA's mission is to serve and protect the interests of its members, promote professionalism, and advance public awareness of the landscape industry. Learn more at www.clca.org

Irrigation: What's New and What's Coming Up in 2021

Excerpted from an article by Jack York, Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply

From new products to new rules and regulations, check out what's new and what's coming up in 2021.

New Technology and Products

As technology continues to evolve in every facet of our lives, the irrigation industry is no different. Environmentally conscious and data-driven technology have been at the forefront of most tech updates, and this coming year is no different. Here are a few new products that can make a big impact on your job and your clients' landscapes.

At this year's Irrigation Association Show, Rain Bird's ESP-LXIVM with Smart Technology won the landscape irrigation category award. It's a high-capacity controller with Smart Valve technology and is the first two-wire system with an Integrated Valve Module. The Integrated Valve Module relays valve status back to the controller and provides real-time monitoring of valves. The ESP-LXIVM standard model can support up to 240 stations, has built-in flow management, leak detection and communications cartridges that can be added for remote water management capabilities.

With consumers taking more of an interest in their yard

maintenance and water use, Flume's Smart Home Water Monitor is another great product to offer customers. It gives homeowners the ability to manage and monitor water use and detect leaks early, so you can help your clients save money and water. The Smart Home Water Monitor is compatible with 95% of homes, connects to Wi-Fi and can be managed through an app on your smartphone.

Hunter Industries has released a 6-inch version of its PGP Ultra Rotor. The 6-inch PGP Ultra Rotor model provides the same benefits and perks as the standard 4-inch model, but offers more height for greater arch radius depending on the need of the landscape or job.

Updated Regulations

Earlier this year, California and Vermont began requiring pressure regulating stems (PRS) on all spray heads sold. Beginning January 2021, Colorado, Hawaii and Washington will join them. Expect to see this trend toward PRS technology to continue in states across the country.

This article originally ran on Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply's blog at www.ewingirrigation.com/news. Find other green industry tips and solutions there too!



The Benefits of Winter Mulching

Winter is a time when we look forward to wearing our favorite sweaters and sitting around a warm fireplace. As the days get shorter and our evenings become cooler,

it's also the perfect time to evaluate the winter needs of our landscape and outdoor spaces. One of the more important winter activities in landscaping is the application of mulch to residential, commercial, and agricultural properties.

Mulch application during these cooler months is an important practice for a variety of reasons. While different mulch products have varying value-added benefits, there are several key benefits that all top dressings share with one

another. In the San Diego area, moisture retention plays a key role in the overall health and wellness of our agricultural and landscaped spaces. Mulch significantly helps soil retain moisture and aids in erosion control. Even during the winter when rainfall amounts increase and some plants are dormant, drought remains a concern.

"With more than 40 years of experience in Southern California, Agri Service is available to help improve your soil by developing custom mulch and soil blends according to your soil tests."

Rainfall may be the most obvious challenge in our coastal deserts, but Southern California also struggles with a lack of organic material in our soil's structure.

> There are a number of mulch products on the market that will add organic material and introduce diverse microbial populations to your soil. Mulch containing composted material or ground brush are wonderful options for applications that aim to improve soil tilth gradually over time. In fact, our winter rains actually help move organics from the soil's surface to areas in which nutrient uptake occurs. This is a vital step in the mineralization process that increases nutrient availability.

Another added advantage gained from winter mulching has nothing to do with the plants and soil we work to protect and improve. Instead, one of the principal benefactors of winter mulching are the men and women trusted to maintain our residential, commercial, and agricultural properties. Property managers and schedulers often have a difficult time finding work for crews during low intensity growing months. Adding mulch application projects to regular maintenance plans decreases employment volatility and helps employers retain trained labor for seasons with an increase on labor demands.

With more than 40 years of experience in Southern California, Agri Service is available to help improve your soil by developing custom mulch and soil blends according to your soil tests. Our background in agronomy will help us create the perfect blend using fertilizer, gypsum, and other amendments to meet your specific needs.

Now is the perfect time to call and schedule your next mulch delivery or application while product is readily available. Increased demand during peak growing seasons often translates to product scarcity. Our trained staff can easily and accurately apply product using our mulch application truck fitted with specialty hoses that can access hard-to-reach areas up to 300 feet away.

You are just one call or click away from finalizing your winter maintenance schedule. Please contact (760) 295-6262 or visit www.agriserviceinc.com to schedule your next product delivery or application. Agri Service has the products you need, and our staff is ready to put your plans in motion.



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Your PPP Loan + Business Deductions = IRS Issues

Did your company receive a Paycheck Protection Program loan? Did you apply for, or receive, loan forgiveness? When you prepare your 2020 tax return, do you plan on claiming a deduction for business expenses funded by the PPP loan?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, CLCA encourages you to hold tight while a recent IRS ruling is clarified.

CLCA's accountants - Gilbert CPAs - and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants believe that the IRS's interpretation denying deductions of expenses forgiven under the PPP program is contrary to Congress's intent.

In an exclusive guidance document prepared by Gilbert CPA for CLCA, two tax experts note that "the IRS has stated that expenses paid with proceeds of PPP loans cannot be deducted because the loans are forgiven without a recipient having taxable cancellation of debt income. Therefore, the proceeds are, in effect, taxexempt income. Expenses allocable to tax-exempt income are nondeductible because deducting the expenses would result in a double tax benefit.

"The IRS's position on the non-deductibility of expenses used for PPP loan forgiveness has been criticized by accounting organizations and some Congress members who have argued that the denial of the deduction for these expenses is inconsistent with legislative intent. Congress may pass new legislation directing the IRS to allow deductions for expenses paid with PPP loan proceeds," Gilbert CPAs' tax experts say.

CLCA continues to work with our accountant and other green industry and small business groups and professional associations to clarify the situation.

With advocacy, action on upcoming events and a Company/HR information portal, CLCA is taking action to help you survive the coronavirus pandemic. Find the most up-to-date information at www.clca.org/covid

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CLCA Teams with MWD of Southern California to Offer Water Efficient Landscape Dual Certification Program

CLCA and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California now offer a one-of-a-kind certification and educational opportunity for landscape professionals in Southern California.

This joint effort combines the CLCA Water Management Certification Program with the Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper program to offer the landscape industry an opportunity to obtain two nationally recognized EPA WaterSense Professional Certifications with one course and one written test.

Presented virtually in six three-hour classes, these workshops will offer CEUs for your current certifications and provide you with a participation certificate. These workshops are free and available only to those in select counties of Southern California within the Metropolitan Water District's service area. The next available session is: January 28 and February 2, 4, 9, 11, and 16, 2021; 9:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

The combined curriculum focuses on landscaping fundamentals in one convenient course and includes topics like: Where Our Water Comes From, Sustainable Landscaping, Landscape Water, Soils, Irrigation Systems, Irrigation Maintenance & Trouble Shooting, Irrigation System Auditing, Irrigation Scheduling,

Irrigation Controllers, Landscape Water Management, and Landscape Water Budgeting.

Thanks to a special grant from MWD, this exclusive course (a \$450 value) is FREE. A \$50 deposit is required to secure each applicant's seat.

A deposit refund is available once an applicant meets four requirements:

- Attends at least 89 percent of the four classes (missing no more than two of the 18 instructional hours)
- Take the 120-question multiple choice written test.
- Participate in the group hands-on irrigation audit conducted in person in Southern California.
- Enroll a landscape site to manage in CLCA's online water budgeting software.

If an applicant does not meet all requirements, the deposit is nonrefundable. Applicants must submit a registration cancellation in writing to CLCA no less than 10 days before the first class or deposit is non-refundable.

Written exam retakes will be available at a rate of \$25 per attempt (non-refundable) for applicants that did not pass the initial written exam with a minimum score of 70 percent. Learn more at https://www.clca.org/ certification-center/water-efficiency-landscape-dualcertification-program/



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Thank you to the following Life Members for their continued support of the association.

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