

JUNE 2023

Offshoot

The Official Publication of the California Landscape Contractors Association San Diego Chapter

www.clcasandiego.org



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Marybeth MacNaughton

President's Message

As California faces an ongoing battle against devastating wildfires, homeowners and Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) must recognize the importance of brush abatement. With the state's dry climate and extensive vegetation, proactive measures to reduce fuel loads and mitigate fire risks are critical. Emphasizing brush abatement allows homeowners and HOAs to safeguard their properties and communities, while also addressing concerns such as insurance companies refusing coverage for new homes in fire-prone areas.

California's unique combination of dry climate, strong winds, and abundant vegetation makes it highly susceptible to wildfires. The dense vegetation, including dry grass, shrubs, and overgrown trees, acts as fuel for rapid fire spread. Embers carried by the wind can ignite homes and structures, leading to property damage, loss of life, and environmental destruction. Brush abatement plays a pivotal role in reducing these risks.

Brush abatement involves systematically removing dry and overgrown vegetation from residential areas. By clearing dead leaves, tall grass, shrubs, and low-hanging branches, the spread of fires can be slowed, providing firefighters with a better chance to control and extinguish them. Implementing these practices significantly reduces the potential for ignition and helps protect homes and communities.

Key Benefits of Brush Abatement

1-Fire Prevention. Brush abatement aims to decrease the risk of fire ignition and limit the spread of wildfires. Creating a defensible space around homes and neighborhoods acts as a buffer zone, reducing the likelihood of flames reaching structures and allowing for safer evacuation.

2-Protection of Lives and Property. Implementing brush abatement measures enhances community safety.

By reducing the availability of flammable materials, homeowners and HOAs improve evacuation times and minimize property damage in the event of a fire.

3-Compliance with Regulations. Many California communities have adopted brush abatement ordinances that require homeowners and HOAs to maintain defensible spaces. Complying with these regulations ensures collective fire safety and demonstrates responsible citizenship.

4-Insurance Coverage. Insurance companies have become more stringent about covering homes in fire-prone areas. Failure to maintain defensible spaces may result in insurers refusing coverage for new homes or increased premiums for existing policies. Emphasizing brush abatement helps homeowners meet insurance requirements and potentially reduce insurance costs.

Working together with landscape contractors, communities can create a safer environment and mitigate the devastating impact of wildfires in California.

“Only YOU can prevent wildfires” - *Smokey the Bear*

~KURAPIA~

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Thursday July 13, 2023

1 HSW AIA Learning Unit



ESCONDIDO LOCATION

1070 W Mission Ave, Escondido, CA 92025

- 5:30pm Networking & Buffet Dinner
- 6:30pm Speakers
- 7:30pm Raffle Drawing

PANEL TOPIC:

SPEAKERS:

**DANNY SMITH, PARKWEST INC.
DIRECTOR OF WATER MANAGEMENT**

Danny will cover the most updated information regarding MWELD/ active legislation; speak on trends and available rebates as it relates to renovations and system improvements; latest information on active legislation that my CLCA members are actively involved in.

**PHILIP J. ARMSTRONG, ASLA
THE LIGHTFOOT PLANNING GROUP**

Phil will provide a legislative update on bills landscape architects and CCASLA are actively following that affect green industry businesses and practices, climate action mandates, and urban greening. He'll also be sharing the emerging design trends that are at the core of some of the green bills in Sacramento this session.

MC:

**MIKE MADEWELL, QWEL, CWM
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Coming Events

Mark your calendar!

July 11

San Diego Chapter General Meeting, 9 a.m.
All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email bronwyn@eyescales.net for the link to attend.

July 13

RCP Educational Event: Emerging Design Trends & Important Legislative Updates, 5:30 p.m.
RSVP to Gina at (619) 247-6594 or tadams31@cox.net.
RCP Block & Brick: 1070 W Mission Ave, Escondido.

August 8

San Diego Chapter General Meeting, 9 a.m.
All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email bronwyn@eyescales.net for the link to attend.

August 10

San Diego Chapter Lunch and Learn: Site One Landscape Supply Open House and Vendor Fair.
There will also be a tour of Modern Builders' natural stone yard. RSVP at www.clcasandiego.org
Site One Landscape Supply: 849 Grand Ave., San Marcos.

September 9

San Diego Chapter Beautification Awards.
Bernardo Winery: 13330 Paseo del Verano Norte, San Diego.

September 12

San Diego Chapter General Meeting, 9 a.m.
All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email bronwyn@eyescales.net for the link to attend.



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Recruitment Tips

By Steven Cesare, Ph.D., The Harvest Group

A business owner from the state of Washington called me the other day to discuss employee recruitment. Like many landscaping companies, the owner remains frustrated with the fact that her company has more work that needs to be done, than that which is capable of being completed in a timely manner by her under-sized workforce.

Think about it. Too much work, too much money, too many customers. A paradoxical curse of riches!

We have all been there for several years. Although the problematic trend has eased slightly, increased sales coupled with rising employee wages remain insufficient in solving the persistent nation-wide staffing shortage. With that backdrop, I presented several recruitment practices to the business owner designed to close that critical employment gap for her company.

Sponsorships. A burgeoning idea has landscapers serving as a corporate sponsor of community-based recreational activities, most notably soccer leagues and teams trying to lure Hispanics into their companies.

In the old days, local businesses used to sponsor little league baseball teams in an effort to attract more customers; now we are trying to recruit employees to meet those customers' needs. Similar sponsorship attempts have landscapers buying advertisement space in local Hispanic restaurants, on their menus, and on restaurant staff uniforms. (Have you seen the Nike icon on any sports team uniform lately?)

Incremental Bonuses. Traditional employee referral bonuses typically offer financial awards to current employees for every successful new recruit hired by the company. Paid out across three timelines (e.g., first day of employment, after six months on the job, and after the end of the season or one year of employment), the referring employee receives a predetermined sum for luring a Foreman, Irrigator, or Laborer to the company. Rather than offering a static amount, capitalistic owners are now offering escalating bonus amounts based on the cumulative number of annual new hires selected by the company. For example, an employee would receive \$400 for the first Laborer brought into the company, \$500 for the second, \$625 for the third, and so on within a given fiscal year.

Spanish-speaking Web Page. Several companies have begun to add a Spanish-speaking box, tab, or app on their websites that when accessed, open up to a video revealing a Hispanic employee providing a 2-3 minute recruitment pitch sharing the positive qualities the company provides (e.g., organizational culture, pay and benefits, skills-based training, environment of respect and teamwork, community advocacy, and a career ladder) to its employees.

Continued on next page...

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Recruitment Tips

...Continued from previous page

Density Maps. In much the same way the Sales staff or Operations team has a wall map, adorned with variously-colored push pins, representing current job sites, several companies have now adopted that same framework for putting push pins onto the addresses of current field employees' home residences. Placement of the push pins highlight the location density of where current employees live, thereby inferring where future primary recruitment efforts should be directed.

Accountability. A growing number of landscaping companies have finally begun to add a Departmental Staffing metric to their Field Supervisors' and/or Department Managers' performance review ratings. Failure to reach stated monthly goals (e.g., 100% Foreman staffing, 90% Laborer staffing) would be documented, while at the same time, achievement of those recruitment goals would yield a financial bonus in much the same way, a Department Manager or Field Supervisor would receive a monthly bonus for achieving

desired enhancements sales, portfolio gross margin, or job quality scores.

Source Yield. As a matter of common practice many landscapers now include a line on their employment application, as well as a formal question on their selection interview protocol, requiring the applicant to specify how s/he heard about the company or the vacant position. Again, the intent is to gain specificity in determining how future recruitment resources should be allocated most efficiently.

We obviously know that recruitment is most successful when several, not solitary, initiatives are put in place.

Hopefully, by doing so, the curse will leave, and the riches will remain with you.

This article was excerpted from the Harvest Group blog, Tuesdays with Steve Cesare.

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West Coast Turf Launches Ready Play Grass®



West Coast Turf is introducing their new line of Ready Play Grass®, natural grass sod grown on plastic for instant use.

“We have been growing sod on plastic for several years,” said West Coast Turf’s Arizona operations general manager, Jay Danek. “We are confident in the product we’ve developed over that time and wanted to bring Ready Play Grass to a bigger market. There is a need for a grass surface that can be used right away.”

“The reason its grown on plastic is for the strength of the plant itself,” Danek explains. “Similar to when you buy a plant at a nursery and the roots are bound in a ball since they can’t go through the plastic. It makes the strength of the sod three to four times of what a normal sod field is by becoming root-bound. The intertwining roots develop a tight mat of rhizomes to firm up the surface, giving it a sturdy base of strength. It weighs about 18 pounds per square foot and can be grown up

to 2 inches thick. After the sod is put down, it is not going anywhere. You can play on it instantly. Because we don’t cut the roots, there is no shock factor to the grass and it is able to start rooting immediately—although it doesn’t have to be rooted for use.”

“We start off with a sod product that has been through its growing cycle of anywhere from 8 to 12 months, and then another 6 to 15 months growing on the plastic. We grow it with sod strength and weight in mind so there is no movement. Our proprietary harvest technique allows for sharp and tight seams so the rolls mesh together perfectly,” Danek added.

Ready Play Grass is ideal for sports fields, golf course tees and driving ranges, and on top of artificial turf fields when a temporary natural grass field is required.

West Coast Turf is a full-service sod company that grows more than 30 varieties of grass, and is the west’s largest grower of drought tolerant warm season turfgrasses. Learn more at www.westcoastturf.com

San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

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

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Mariposa Landscape

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Ewing Rebrands to Ewing Outdoor Supply

Name Change Reflects Company Growth, Vision for Future Leading into Next Century of Business



Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply announced recently that it will update its name to Ewing Outdoor Supply to better reflect the customers and markets served. This change will take effect July 1, 2023.

Throughout its 100 years serving landscape professionals, Ewing has continuously evolved to match the ever-changing industry, markets and customers. This brand change is consistent with the growth and evolution of the company, leading Ewing into its next century of business.

A key component of the rebrand is to have the company name support the width of Ewing product categories and the type of customers Ewing serves, all within the outdoor materials space. The company's product categories and service offerings have grown in diversity over recent years, serving customers products in hardscapes, synthetic turf, outdoor living, sustainable outdoor solutions, micro irrigation, battery-powered equipment, agronomics, mulch and much more. Along with the additional product categories, Ewing added bulk materials yards to its business portfolio in 2018 in select western U.S. markets, operating under the Ewing Landscape Materials brand.

"As we entered our second century in business, we felt an updated name and branding encompassing the width of our full offering helps provide clarity in the market and to customers," said Douglas W. York, Ewing's President and CEO. "We believe Ewing Outdoor Supply better speaks to the variety of customers we serve, including contractors, superintendents, turf and sports field professionals and other outdoor landscaping professionals."

Starting July, Ewing will update its logo, website domain (EwingOutdoorSupply.com), company email addresses, and advertising. The company will roll out additional branding changes throughout the next year.

Ewing Outdoor Supply will continue to serve green industry professionals with the same quality of personalized Blue Counter service customers have come to know and lean on at Ewing locations nationwide. Ewing remains committed to providing high-quality products from top vendors, resources and support for customer success and customer service excellence.

"My grandfather, King W. Ewing, believed that the only way to do business was to treat the customer right," said York. "At Ewing, our family of employees continue to embrace King's founding philosophy. It's the foundation for everything we do."

Now celebrating 100+ years of serving the green industry, Ewing Outdoor Supply has worked to provide irrigation and landscape contractors products and services that offer value to green industry professionals. As the largest family-owned national supplier in the green industry, they offer products and education for irrigation and landscape, turf and land management, outdoor living, sports fields, golf and sustainable solutions. Their nationwide network of friendly, knowledgeable staff helps green industry professionals discover products and services for business success. From exceptional Blue Counter customer service to online account services and rewards programs, you can lean on Ewing for all your green industry business needs.

An advertisement for Agri Service featuring a large green leaf graphic on the right side. The background shows a garden bed with yellow flowers. The text includes the company logo, a call to action, contact information, and a list of services.

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An advertisement for A-G Sod Farms Inc. featuring a stylized logo of a sod roll. The text includes the company name, a contact person, phone numbers, and website.

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SD Chapter Members Visit Milwaukee Tool Headquarters on June 8 to Learn About New Electric Tool Legislation, Cost of Ownership, Equipment Comparisons, and More!



Milwaukee Tool reps Isabel Claudio and Bradley Herzog provided lots of helpful information to assist members in the transition to electric equipment.



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