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# Wisiom Visiom

Official Publication of the Orange County Chapter of California Landscape Contractors Association • www.clca-orangecounty.org



OC VISION
P.O. Box 12044
Newport Beach, CA 92658

Cover Photo: Montecito Residence by 2019 multi award-winning contractor Terra Prima, Inc.





Edward Wallace
Midwest Landscaping
Chapter President

#### **Back to School?**

et your butt up and get ready for school! How many times did you hear that not-so-calm *suggestion* from your parents or guardians?

I didn't hear it that much in my home as I did not want to lay

around and sleep and miss all the action that was going to happen at school each day. New ideas, new and old faces, sharp-looking teachers (yes, I had my share of teacher crushes), and just the excitement of starting a new school year and sharing what I have been up to this past summer was enough to help kick-start me out of bed each morning.

Kids nowadays are not privy to these same opportunities since the "age of COVID" has us buying new laptops and computers to do virtual learning. This is the new trend, and I heard recently from a parent that even though their kids are not going to be in school, in some school districts here in California they are still required to have nice dress clothes on – no pajamas or raggedy clothes when they are online! No savings on the clothes budget for the parents, I guess.

We have the same situation in our contractor association where we have had to cancel many of our social events due to the pandemic. We've also had to modify our monthly members' events that we use to keep our members informed, educated, enlightened, and connected. Please take the time out to log on to our state website (www.clca. org). It's a place where there are a lot of opportunities to learn. For example, you can learn about:

•the opportunities available online to become certified in various landscape industry fields

•the various new legislative bills our CLCA legislative committee are reviewing and giving input on that may adversely affect our businesses

•what our local CLCA chapter members have been discovering, such as the various treatments and scientific remedies that will reduce the negative results to our citrus and ornamental shrub industries

How exciting is that? By logging in to our state and chapter (www.clca-orangecounty.org) websites, you will have the tools and knowledge to keep in step with what's going on in our industry and you will be excited about our own version of going back to school!

My PMA book of the month suggestion will actually be an early notice to attend our only socially acceptable event for the year: our annual golf event on Tuesday, October 6. It will be a limited golfer event and we want to create a positive and fun atmosphere for our chapter members during these challenging times. Check our website for further information.

See you on the trails. ~Ed

## CLCA-OC Calendar & Other Upcoming Events Mark Your Calendars & Save the Dates Now!

Oct. 6 Chapter Golf Event, Irvine.

Limited space. Reserve your spot by Sept. 15. *Oak Creek Golf Club: 1 Golf Club Drive, Irvine.* 

Oct. 28 2021 OC Chapter Planning Meeting.

**Dec. TBD** Chapter Holiday Party.

#### Support Those Who Support Our Chapter!



Yes! That's exactly what I want to say.

Judy Rose

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For information about what we're doing in 2019, contact Ed.



**V.P. Education ROLAND ZAMORA** Veterans Landscaping, Inc. (714) 393-2726

For inquiries relating to educational programs and their development, contact Roland.



V.P. Legislation **DAVE NORRED** Nor-Land Landscaping Co. (949) 495-6469

For legislation information, on both the state and local level, contact Dave.



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For records of the chapter board meeting minutes, contact Judy.



V.P. Membership SAL HERNANDEZ Pacific Breeze Landscape, Inc. (714) 909-3784

For information about becoming a CLCA-OC Chapter member, contact Sal.



**AM Representative** SCOTT MOAN Site One Landscape Supply (562) 338-0896

For questions relating to our OC Champions program or Golf Tournament, contact Scott.



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For anything chapter finance related, contact Steve.



V.P. Events **DENNIS VO** DV Construction & Landscaping, Inc. (714) 271-1442

For questions relating to our educational meetings or annual programs and events, contact Dennis.



**Chapter Editor/Webmaster BRONWYN MILLER** Eyescapes (949) 466-1222

For inquiries relating to chapter communications, both print and online, contact Bronwyn.

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For answers to general inquiries, or to learn about CLCA's mentor program, contact Richard.

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earn from a variety of speakers on a variety of topics, including plants, trees, pesticide application and much more. Attend any or all of the SIX, live, interactive webinars that CLCA is offering.

Plan to pull up a seat each Wednesday — September 16 through October 21 and earn CEU's while you do!

#1 | Wednesday, September 16 • 11 a.m.- Noon Expanding Your Plant Palette: Latest Trends and Plants in Landscape Design

Nicolaus Staddon and Suzie Wiest of Village Nurseries/Tree Town USA

CEUs Available: APLD, ISA, NALP

#2 | Wednesday, September 23 • 11 a.m.- Noon Preparing Your Trees for California's Next Drought Igor Lacan of the UC Cooperative Extension CEUs Available: ISA, DPR, NALP

#3 | Wednesday, September 30 • 11 a.m.- Noon Identifying Common Tree Pests and Diseases

Dawn Fluharty of Arborjet

CEUs Available: ISA, DPR, NALP

#4 | Wednesday, October 7 • 3 - 4:30 p.m. Pesticide Safety, Labels, Toxicology & PPE

Frank Niccoli, Horticulture Department Program Director, Foothill College

CEUs Available: DPR, NALP

#5 | Wednesday, October 14 • 3 - 4:30 p.m. Pesticide Formulations and When to Use the Right **Formulation** 

Frank Niccoli, Horticulture Department Program Director,

Foothill College

CEUs Available: DPR, NALP

#6 | Wednesday, October 21 • 3 - 4 p.m. Managing Pesticide Resistance

Frank Niccoli, Horticulture Department Program Director,

Foothill College

CEUs Available: DPR, NALP

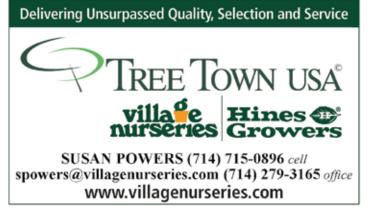
**Pricing:** 

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Register at: https://member-clca.org/max/4DCGI/events/ Register.html?Action=Register&ConfID W=629

# ADVERTISE IN THE OC VISION! Call (949) 466-1222 or visit the chapter's website for information.







#### **Creative Ways to Stay in Contact with Customers During COVID-19**

I umans are social creatures and many landscapers will tell you one of their favorite things about the business is the relationships. So, in a time of social distancing how can you still connect with your customers and maintain bonds?

Although most lockdowns have been lifted, meeting in person may not be an option for various reasons. Don't be afraid to get creative with ways to get face time with clients and stay top of mind with them.

#### **Hold Video Conferences**

One of the staples of the pandemic is video conferencing and it isn't something that has to be just limited to communicating with your staff. There are a number of video call options including Zoom, FaceTime, Microsoft Teams, and Skype. Whichever platform you choose to utilize, make sure you're aware of the limitations they might have.

Take the time to test your speakers and mic so you can both hear and be heard by your client, before the meeting. If you're planning to video chat with a new lead, send the potential customer all the instructions they need to access the video smoothly, prior to the meeting.

When talking with existing clients don't be afraid to ask how they're doing personally. Letting them know you care about their well-being can go a long way and open lines of communication.

#### **Record Walk-Throughs**

On the commercial side of things, there are a number of companies that are still working remotely. This means property managers are not able to keep an eye on their sites and see if there are any unexpected needs cropping up. This is where your crews can step in and be that extra pair of eyes when they visit various commercial properties.

You can opt to simply notify them of the issues you might find and let them decide if they'd like you to take care of it. If the problem is minor, you can also choose to be proactive and go ahead and fix the issue. Letting them know you've already handled it will reassure them and alleviate some of their stress.



#### Offer Helpful Webinars

Many clients are staying home for large chunks of time and many are noticing their yards a lot more. Provide helpful content by creating webinars or videos that show them the basics of creating a container garden or how to identify what is ailing their hydrangea.

You can also opt for a more casual option and host a Facebook Live or Instagram Live video. With these, you can do a Q&A, showcase a service you provide or how you've been helping out in the community.

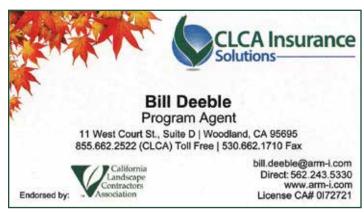
#### **Post Positive Content to Social Media**

One thing you want to avoid is going dark on social media. Use these channels as another way to keep people up-to-date on any changes going on with your business.

Also, social media sites are an excellent tool to share inspiring and uplifting stories. This could be sharing how your company is giving back to the community, celebrating employees for reaching milestones, or even posting pictures of flowers or wildlife crews encounter while working. Remind customers to get outside and enjoy the benefits of nature.

This article was excerpted from the original, authored by Jill Odom, published on the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) blog at https://blog.landscapeprofessionals.org/







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# NOW'S THE PERFECT TIME TO UPDATE YOUR FLEET!



#### **Discrimination Due to Heat-Related Time Off?**

By Steve Cesare Ph.D., The Harvest Group

business owner from Florida called me the other day to discuss employee time off due to a recent heat wave hitting her part of the state. After four consecutive days of temperatures above 90 degrees and humidity above 90%, the business owner had a team meeting with her field operations staff and told them they were going to be sent home due to



or indirect discrimination against a protected class of employees. In specific: They can set employee work schedules, require employees to work overtime, mandate when employees must take vacation time, deny employee requests for vacation time, and miracle of miracles, even send employees home when the business owner wants to do so.

the extreme weather, and that they were not to return to work until the following Monday.

Just to be clear: The non-exempt field employees were not paid for this time off, though the exempt employees (e.g., Account Managers) did receive their standard salary for that entire week. This situation is the mirror image of an unexpected rain event. In such cases, most business owners inform their non-employees to not come to work when it is raining; a condition that provides unpaid leave for non-exempt employees, and paid time for exempt employees. Naturally, this type of decision, though ultimately at the discretion of the business owner, should be summarized as part of the company's Inclement Weather Policy found within the Employee Handbook.

Back to the original story. After the Florida business owner informed her field operations team that they were not to report to work until Monday, she then relayed that same decision to the office staff. Once the office staff heard the owner's decision, one office employee asked if the same decision was applicable to them. The owner said her decision only applied to the field staff in that their work was distinctly performed outside in the extreme heat, while office employees routinely complete their work assignments in an air conditioned building. At that point, the office employee told the owner she was going to call a lawyer and file a discrimination lawsuit against the business owner for treating office employees differently than field employees.

That's when the business owner called me.

Legally, business owners have the discretion to allocate work time as they desire, as long as there is no direct

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As I shared with the business owner, based upon the facts conveyed to me, there was clearly no discrimination in this instance; needless to say, she was sincerely relieved. Moreover, I informed the business owner that if the office employee wanted to take time off from work, she should proceed with the normal administrative request process.

With our conversation coming to a close, out of rote obligation I reminded the business owner to check her EPLI policy to see if it contains FLSA coverage, that she conduct monthly payroll audits (e.g., hours worked, overtime, time off usage), and that she should not respond in any retaliatory fashion to the identified litigious office employee.

If you have any questions about this topic or anything else related to human resources, call Steve at (760) 685-3800. This article was excerpted from the Harvest Group blog, Tuesdays with Steve Cesare.



#### **Incremental Profits Through Holiday Lighting Installation**

their lights up and on

around Thanksgiving ...

You'll want to start

your sales and

marketing efforts as

early as September."

of your business? If not, this may be a great way to expand your client portfolio and generate revenue during the slowest part of the year. "Most clients will want

Holiday lighting installation is a natural extension for a landscape professional because you already have the essentials (vehicle, employees, ladder, insurance). And with aging Baby Boomers representing 21% of our population, demand for "do it for me" services continues to grow. According to Irrigation and Green Industry, jobs average about \$1,500 per installation but can sell for as much as \$20,000.

Let's take a look at a few things you should consider before getting into this new business.

#### **Initial Investment**

Your primary investment to get started is obviously the light strands. You may be tempted to reduce initial cost and choose less expensive "box store" lights rather than contractor-grade. This may work your first season, but when those low-quality lights start to break, your labor costs for replacements will quickly eat into your profits.

Many supply partners will offer demo lights that you can use

re you offering holiday lighting installation as part to close the deal, and then use your client's initial payment to cover the cost of the strand.

#### Sell or Rent

There are two approaches to this business. The first is to sell the lighting system to the client the first year and reuse that set each season. This approach is more expensive for the client that first year but reduces their costs the following seasons since they are only paying for installation. The client retains possession of the lights or you can offer to store them for an additional cost. This approach tends to lock in a client for multiple seasons; plus, starting with a new strand extends the life of the lights. The other option is to rent

or lease the lights to your clients each season. This reduces overall investment as you can reuse strands over and over and keeps you from having to track ownership of the lights.

#### **Potential Customers**

When considering possible clients, the first thought is residential. But more and more businesses are installing holiday lighting and are often willing to pay more for the service. They also don't have labor readily available to do the installation. This makes the commercial market – small strip centers, medical offices, restaurants, and hotels - a more reliable source of income.

Continued on Next Page...

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#### **Incremental Profits Through Holiday Lighting Installation**

... Continued from Previous Page

#### Be Ready for the Season!

Most clients will want their lights up and on around Thanksgiving, but not much sooner. This means the window to complete your jobs is narrow and inflexible. You'll want to start your sales and marketing efforts as early as September and order your product soon after – ideally you want to have everything ready to go by Halloween.

Holiday lighting can be a worthwhile opportunity at a time when business is a little slow, but it takes planning and preparedness. Horizon stores have been helping landscape professionals with this business for years, and we can help you get started too. Visit www.horizononline.com for more info.

This article was originally published on Horizon Distributors blog at www.horizononline.com/blog/

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# Defend Trees Against Pests: Southern Pine Bark Beetle

#### What Is the Threat

Southern Pine Beetles (Dendroctonus frontalis), along with several other types of bark beetles, are known to attack and kill southern yellow pines during periods of environmental stress. These beetles bore into the cambium in large groups, and disrupt nutrient and water movement, thus killing the tree. Several of these species also introduce a fungus, known as blue stain, which may kill a tree by clogging its vascular systems.



Pine bark beetle outbreaks are being fueled by drought conditions and other environmental stress factors such as wildfires and storms throughout the southeastern United States. The Southern Pine Beetle originated in the southeastern United States, but is now found as far north as New Jersey and as far west as Texas.

#### **Symptoms**

These beetles will attack healthy pines, but severe environmental stress increases susceptibility. Individually attacked trees may look faded or have mixed tan and green needles progressing to red, followed by tree death over several weeks. Cream to red colored pitch tubes will be present in the lower bole of the tree. As water becomes limited, the pitch turns from cream to red and will be crumbly. Most of these beetles carry a fungus that serves as a food base for young larvae. The introduced fungus then adds to inhibited water transport ability and hastens tree mortality.

#### What To Do About It

A trunk injection of TREE-äge® G4 will provide up to two years of protection against bark beetle damage. Preventative treatment is best, as trees with existing beetle infestations are less likely to survive. In areas where beetles carry the blue stain fungus, it is recommended that Propizol® systemic fungicide be added as a sequential treatment to eliminate additional stress from the fungus.

There are many things affecting the health of our trees, especially in our urban and suburban forests. Often by treating underlying symptoms, like root loss or drought stress, or treating preventively when invasive pest pressure is near, we can protect our trees for generations to come. Learn more about plant damaging insects at www. arborjet.com/problems\_solutions\_category/insects-and-mites/

#### **Photos**

First (top): Southern Pine Beetle.

Photo by USDA Forest Service - Region 8 - Southern, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

**Second: Jeffery Pine Beetle pupa.** *Photo taken by: Tia Smith, Bugwood.org* 

Third: Southern Pine Beetle; multiple generations of pitch tubes.

Photo taken by Arborjet, Inc.

Fourth (bottom): Damage from Southern Pine Beetle.

Photo taken by Arborjet, Inc.

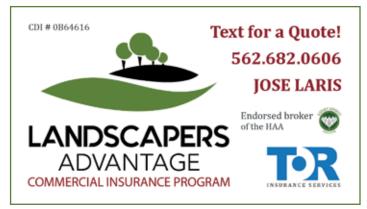
















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