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San Luis Obispo Chapter
California Landscape Contractors Association
Representing the Landscaping & Irrigation Industry

LEAF Accepting Scholarship Apps

Since 1972, the California Landscape Contractors Association Auxiliary has offered scholarships to college and university students majoring in landscape related programs. In 1988, the Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation (LEAF) was formed to carry on the tradition of awarding financial aid to deserving students.

LEAF is now accepting applications for scholarships to be awarded in the Fall of 2021. The application deadline is April 15, 2021.

In 2020, nine Green Industry students received a total of \$38,100 in LEAF Scholarships. "I admire their passion and focus and believe that these young people will be leaders in our industry," said Marianne Estournes, LEAF Scholarship Selection Committee Chair.

For more information on scholarships or to download the application, visit <https://www.clca.org/industry-resources/college-scholarships-leaf/>

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Supporting LEAF

Education is the key to your industry's future! Through LEAF you can help foster this growth. Send your tax-deductible donation to invest in a dream by providing for your future as well as theirs! Contact Sandra Giarde at CLCA, (916) 830-2780.

Or, mail donations to:
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Contributions allow scholarships to grow and help give students the assistance needed to achieve their educational goals. View the current fund report. You can also contribute to LEAF via your will through the LEAF Legacy program.



LEAF Scholarship Selection Chair Marianne Estournes re-unites with LEAF scholarship recipient Hallie Schmidt during CLCA's 2019 Annual Convention. Hallie is now the owner and chief designer of Tierra Madre.

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Employee Handbook Distribution

Steven Cesare, Ph.D. The Harvest Group, Landscape Business Consulting | harvestlandscapeconsulting.com

A landscaper from Michigan called me to talk about her company's employee handbook. Revising the handbook was straightforward and successful, but the landscaper took a cavalier approach to its distribution and more importantly, the process associated with receiving the signed Handbook Acknowledgment Form from every employee. Her approach was to distribute the employee handbooks as part of an ongoing event (e.g., safety tailgate meeting) and then have the employees drop off the signed acknowledgment forms to the main office sometime afterward.

In place of that haphazard plan, here is the annual employee handbook distribution process I proposed:

1. Employee Handbooks are distributed through the management team to all employees. Given that managers are responsible for supervising their staff and holding them accountable for policy compliance, it must be the managers, not the office staff, who hand deliver the employee handbook to each of their employees.
2. Each Manager receives a payroll roster of his/her employees. The Payroll Department must generate a roster of each Manager's direct and indirect subordinates, based on the organizational chart, to alert each Manager of the number of employee handbooks that must be distributed and to whom. As the employee handbooks are distributed, the Manager must put the date each employee received the handbook on that roster next to the employee's name for documentation purposes.
3. At the time of distribution, the Manager must inform each subordinate that the signed Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Forms must be returned to the Manager within one week.
4. Each name on employee roster is exhausted to

ensure 100% return rate. Using the same roster as previously-mentioned in Step 2, the Manager documents the date the employee returns the Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form to the Manager. The Manager must not deliver the Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Forms to the main office until every one of the names on his/her roster has returned the Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form.

5. All signed Acknowledgment Forms are returned to the office for compliance check. Once received from the Manager, the office confirms that each employee has submitted a signed and dated, Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form.
6. The office scans and files Handbook Acknowledgment Forms in every employee's personnel file.

In much of the country, this process should be completed on all current employees by January 20th each year. By the same token, those companies which close for the snow season should have this process completed on all returning employees within one week of beginning the landscape season.



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Routine Maintenance: Why It's Important and How to Get It Right

Taking care of your equipment and performing regular routine maintenance is one of the most important things you can do to help your equipment last longer.

Manufacturers' recommended maintenance schedules aren't just arbitrary suggestions. They're based on extensive testing of what's required to maintain the integrity of your machine. And these recommended scheduled events need to take place in order to get the best quality out of your unit.

The first place to look for this information is your operator's manual. If you don't have yours handy, try the manufacturer's website and search for your model number or serial number to find the operator's manual and other parts and service details. Here are some additional tips to help you get the most out of your equipment investment:

1. Make a list of daily operation checks and use it. Examples include checking the engine oil level, hydraulic system, cooling system, etc.
2. Use the proper engine oil classification for your machine.
3. Don't exceed the specified service interval. You can always perform regular maintenance sooner than required, but skipping or delaying tasks may shorten the life of your machine.
4. Document everything. Keep records of the maintenance you've performed and parts you've ordered. This gives you a timeline to keep your maintenance on track and helps answer questions if you need to make a warranty claim.
5. Don't forget to do a functional pre-maintenance safety check. Before you perform any maintenance tasks, make sure all the safety items are working properly.
6. Stick with original equipment manufacturer (OEM) parts. It may be tempting to grab a filter from the local auto parts store when you need one, but an off-the-shelf product may not have the same specifications as the OEM part. Small differences can result in equipment damage, which can end up costing much more to repair.



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What To Do With Treated Wood Waste?

Hint: Request a hazardous waste disposal variance on February 16.

As of January, 2021, there are very few options for the disposal of hazardous treated wood waste in California.

Furthermore, the limited options that do exist involve managing the treated wood waste as a fully regulated hazardous waste, which is procedurally more difficult and costly. For many generators, temporarily accumulating the treated wood waste is an available option that should be considered.

The state agency responsible for protecting California's people and environment from toxic substances say they understand that "the change in status of treated wood waste and the sunset of the Alternative Management Standards has been disruptive and has caused frustration to many."

"The DTSC (California Department of Toxic Substance Control) is aware of the urgency in resolving this problem and we are actively working on the variance application process."

Used in fence posts, sill plates, landscape timbers, pilings, guardrails and decking, treated wood must now be disposed of in class 1 hazardous waste landfills, following the expiration of a law authorizing less onerous waste management standards.

After December 31, 2020, all treated wood waste "that exhibits the hazardous waste characteristic of toxicity will be a fully regulated hazardous waste and will no longer be eligible for disposal in Class II or Class III landfills," a fact sheet from the California Department of Toxic Substance Control says.

Fortunately, on February 16 the department will start accepting requests for variances that allow the disposal of treated wood waste under the less onerous expired standards. The department is planning to issue the variances beginning on March 1.

In advance of activating the online variance application system, the department is releasing the application questions so prospective applicants can start gathering the information necessary to apply.

In the meantime, "the accumulation of hazardous waste for up to 90-days is generally authorized regardless of generator status," the department's treated wood waste FAQ states.

Depending on the manufacturing process and age, treated wood may contain a variety of toxic substances, including arsenic, chromium, copper, pentachlorophenol and creosote. In a 2019 report to the Legislature, however, the department notes that not all wood that is treated with a preservative is a potential hazardous waste.

A long-term solution is currently under consideration in the California Legislature. The Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxics Committee put forth AB 332 as a placeholder bill (meaning it has some broad stroke language, but not a lot of specifics yet) to address the treated wood disposal issue. The bill could, and likely will, become more detailed before it is heard in committee. CLCA will continue to monitor the proposed legislation. Look to future issues of The Cutting Edge for more information.

Free HR Hotline

California's laws, rules and regulations about the employer/employee relationship are complex. CLCA's Human Resources (HR) Hotline can help.

- What forms are required by law when I hire a new employee?
- Can I ask if an applicant has a criminal history?
- My employee is chronically late for his shift. How can I manage the situation?
- Can my employees work through their lunch as long as I provide the pizza?
- Do I have to pay for the tools used by my employees?
- What about medical marijuana?

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Rain Bird

A privately held company founded in 1933, Rain Bird Corporation is the leading manufacturer and provider of irrigation products and services. Since its beginnings, Rain Bird has offered the industry's broadest range of irrigation products for farms, golf courses, sports arenas, commercial developments and homes in more than 130 countries around the world.

Rain Bird has been awarded more than 450 patents worldwide, including the first in 1935 for the original horizontal action impact drive sprinkler (U.S. Patent #1,997,901), which revolutionized the food production industry and ushered in a new era in irrigation, worldwide. Today, Rain Bird offers over 4,000 irrigation products and services.

In the early 1930s, Clem and Mary LaFetra, established Rain Bird in the family barn in Glendora, California. The very first product, the original impact sprinkler, was developed to more efficiently irrigate nearby citrus orchards. Today, Rain Bird is a global leader in efficient irrigation.

Decades before the term "water restrictions" became a part of common vernacular, Rain Bird recognized the need to protect and efficiently use the world's most precious resource. Rain Bird's guiding philosophy, The Intelligent Use of Water™, continues to influence all aspects of the business. Rain Bird has spent the past eight decades developing the industry's most comprehensive line of water-efficient irrigation solutions for everything from homes and schools to parks, sports fields, golf courses and farms.

Rain Bird is committed to The Intelligent Use of Water™ and will continue to develop products and initiatives that will help Californians make responsible, informed choices about the ways we all use water. By taking advantage of intelligent watering products and practices today, we can usher in a new era of water efficiency and sustainable water use, not just in California, but around the world.

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