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

Weighted Average Compensation

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A business owner called to discuss calculating compensation for an employee who performs two distinctly different jobs within the same workweek and how that would impact overtime pay. The employee worked 40 hours a week as a Foreman earning \$22/per hour from Monday through Friday. On Saturday, the employee performed shop responsibilities for 10 hours, at a rate of \$15/per hour.

The business owner thought the employee would receive straight time pay of \$880 (40 hours multiplied by \$22/per hour) and an additional \$225 (\$15/per hour multiplied by the overtime rate of 1.5, then multiplied by 10 hours) as overtime pay for the work performed on Saturday. By these calculations, the employee should receive \$1,105 (\$880 plus \$225) for his weekly pay.

This calculation was wrong. The correct manner for determining this employee's weekly pay is based upon the weighted average formula. In most states, the standard weighted average formula for the situation above is as follows:

- 40 hours worked as a Foreman @ \$22/hour
- 10 hours worked as a Shop Employee @ \$15/hour
- 50 total hours worked in the same work week
- 40 (Foreman Hours Worked) X \$22 (Foreman Hourly Rate) = \$880
- 10 (Shop Employee Hours Worked) X \$15 (Shop Employee Hourly Rate) = \$150

With these figures, we can now calculate the pay as follows:

- 1.) $\$880 + \$150 = \$1,030$ (Regular Pay)
- 2.) $\$1,030$ divided by 50 (Total Hours Worked During the Workweek) = \$20.60
- 3.) $\$20.60 \times .5$ (Overtime Rate since employee has already received straight time pay) = \$10.30
- 4.) $\$10.30 \times 10$ (Overtime Hours Worked During that Workweek) = \$103 (Overtime Pay)
- 5.) $\$1,030 + \$103 = \$1,133$ (Total Weekly Pay)

Thus, the business owner underpaid this employee by \$28 (\$1,133 minus \$1,105) for the workweek in question. The employee would generally have up to three years to file a lawsuit against the business owner for unpaid wages, with the possibility of additional penalties as determined by state and/or federal law.

Employers should always ensure that their practices are consistent with respective state laws. There are multiple variations of the weighted average formula depending upon unique circumstances (e.g., performing three jobs instead of two, receiving a non-discretionary bonus in addition to differential hourly pay rates, and compensation received as part of a piece rate system).

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Smart Yards are Smart for Your Business

By Robyn Hazen, content marketing specialist at Ewing Irrigation and Landscape Supply.

Updated tech has led to new advancements in landscaping and irrigation, including the introduction of the “smart yard.” These smart yards provide instant information to homeowners and contractors. They’re easy to use and your customers can save money on their water bills.

“It’s the easiest way to save water,” says Mitch Heiner, National Irrigation Product Manager at Ewing Irrigation and Landscape Supply. “It’s a plug and play way to save 30% to 50% on your water bill per year.” Savings for your customers could mean business opportunities for you.

Keep these three things in mind when talking with customers about adding this new technology.

Products

Smart controllers are timers with sensors that allow users to remotely monitor irrigation systems through apps that can be downloaded to smartphones. By regulating water usage, these advanced products foster sustainability and save precious resources.

Smart controllers adjust to the ideal sprinkler run times depending on local weather conditions. Many can simply shut off if there’s been a storm and there’s no current need to irrigate.

The major players in smart controllers and high-tech monitoring: Hunter, Rain Bird, Toro and Rachio.

The Rachio 3 and Hunter Pro-C Hydrawise offer the most advanced features. Once you enter information such as landscape type and soil type into the wi-fi enabled smart controller, these units will re-evaluate weather patterns and data throughout the day. For example, the unit knows when the temperatures goes up and water may be evaporating. The smart controller then determines if it should schedule another irrigation cycle to maintain a healthy yard or hold off on watering. Most of these units work with smart home devices like Amazon Alexa.

The Rain Bird LNK acts more like a remote control than a stand-alone smart controller. This app-based product simply plugs into the accessory port of a handful of controllers and lets you configure the scheduling as you see fit.

Toro’s SMRT-T Logic Internet Gateway allows users to remotely control all Toro irrigation controllers, eliminating the need to purchase and learn a new controller. It also provides the ability to remotely manage outdoor lighting or other features. It’s simple plug and play operation allows the SMRT Logic to sync with the homeowner’s router and connect to the internet using a proprietary 900 MHz radio signal that does not require network passwords.

Smart controllers also work with moisture sensors and flow meters. Flow meters can be wired up to any smart controller as long as it has the flow sensing.

Procedure

The install for smart controllers is the same as the install for a traditional controller. However, you will need access to the router on site, the router name and password in order to complete the set up.

Each brand features its own smartphone app allowing you to manage everything remotely from your phone. It’s possible to override the schedule when necessary, but units will make their own adjustment based on the weather after the initial set up. In the event of a power outage, the unit resets itself when the power comes back on and will resume cycles where it left off.

Homeowners find these controllers help save money on water bills. Smart controllers, like the Rachio 3 and Hunter Pro-HC with Hydrawise for commercial use are capable of working with 12, 16 or even 24 zones.

Process

One of the most useful features of smart controllers is the ability for both the homeowner and the contractor to have access to the information through the user-friendly smartphone app.

Rachio and Hunter provide detailed usage reports on their websites including how much water has been saved and how much water has been used year to date as well as insights on upcoming weather.

These features save you time and money – now, a scheduled trip to a home or business may be unnecessary. Over the course of weeks and months, that’s multiple site visits that you don’t need to make. You save on gas and more importantly on the time spent to review your customers’ landscaping.

“If you don’t have a smart controller now, you probably will,” Mitch says. “The future is now. And it’s a great return on investment – you could see a return in as soon as two years.”

CLCA Water Management Certification

Why Become Certified

A significant amount of California's urban water use is devoted to irrigating landscapes. Our state's population has increased to the point where demand is exceeding our existing water supplies — and there's no more water to make up the deficit. The demand on landscape contractors to provide more efficient water management is the highest it's ever been.

CLCA's Water Management Certification Program is helping industry professionals meet market demands due to water restrictions and water prices.

This program is designed to train water managers to provide customers with good to excellent landscape appearance using the right amount of water based on actual plant requirements.

Profiting From Water Management

For the contractors who are applying the principles right now on their job sites, results are tangible. Some of the financial rewards you can expect as a CLCA-certified water manager include:

- Lower labor costs due to improved landscapes (faster

to maintain per visit);

- Profits from irrigation system repairs, upgrades, and retrofits (a higher per-hour labor rate than landscape maintenance alone);
 - Additional service charges for the water management itself (savvy clients would rather pay landscape contractors \$750 for saved water than \$1200 to their water districts for wasted water);
 - Added value to your overall services, which results in satisfied clients.
 - CLCA Certified Water Managers can also apply for a WaterSense partnership through the EPA WaterSense program. There are also business opportunities associated with becoming a WaterSense partner, including:
 - The program allows certified individuals to conduct irrigation audits on new landscape projects that fall under California's newly updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.
 - Once they become WaterSense Partners, Certified Water Managers can do new home irrigation work under the recently released WaterSense Single Family New Home Specification.
- Visit www.clca.org/certification-center/water-management-certification/about-the-program/



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Chapter Sponsor Spotlight: Belgard



Belgard

Belgard has built a reputation on making the outdoors beautiful. Their uncompromising level of quality and craftsmanship sets the standard for hardscapes. And their remarkably natural look and feel is unrivaled in the industry.

Since 1995, Belgard's locally made and nationally backed products have transformed thousands of residential and commercial properties across North America. Every day, a network of trained and certified contractors and dealers help customers envision their creative journey and realize their outdoor dreams.

Belgard strives to improve their products by spending more than 20,000 hours in research and develop-

ment every year. Perfecting new products keeps the company aligned to current design trends and places Belgard on the cutting edge of manufacturing techniques and technologies.

Belgard sets the standard for landscape design and innovation. The company is committed to providing you and your family with years of outdoor beauty and protection.

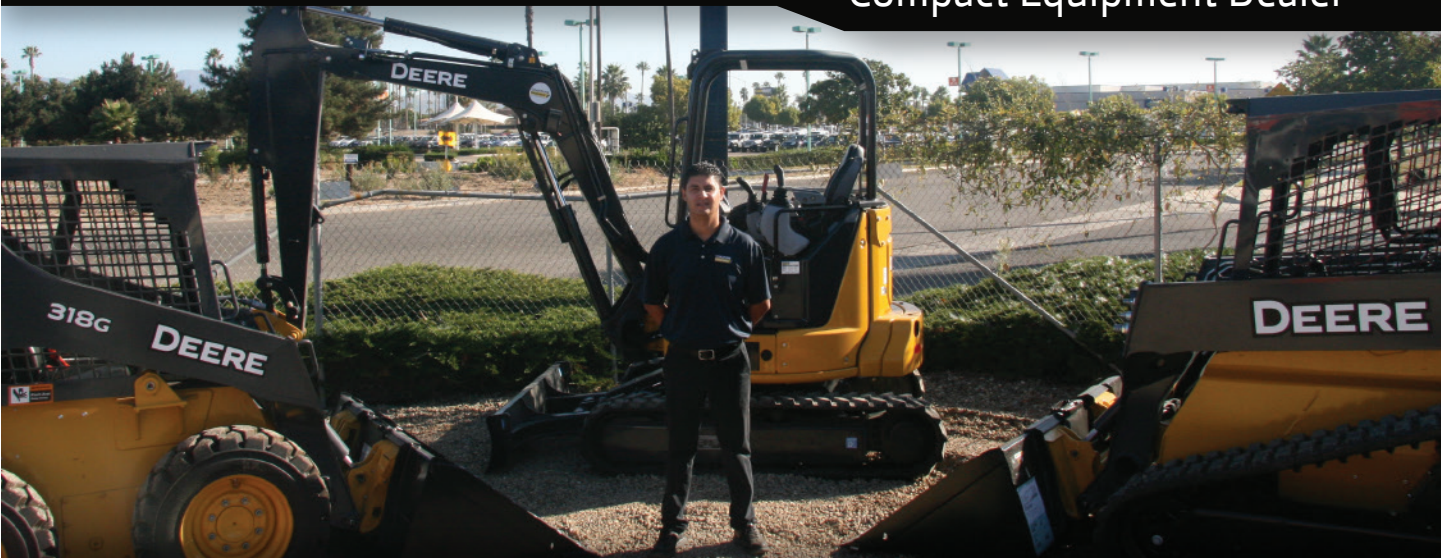
From eye-catching driveways, to stunning patios, to serene landscapes, Belgard offers an array of hardscape products to complement the home and create the perfect dreamscape. Belgard specializes in a number of styles of landscape and patio paver products, including permeable and interlocking pavers, as well as retaining walls, finishes, and other applications such as fire pits and outdoor ovens.

Belgard believes that staying ahead of the learning curve is essential to growing your business. That's why they offer unique learning opportunities to help professionals expand their hardscape knowledge through classroom and hands-on industry training offered by Belgard.

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