

MAY 2021

# Offshoot

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

[www.clcasandiego.org](http://www.clcasandiego.org)

Offshoot  
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Cover Photo: Williams Project by  
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## President's Message

*Willie Valdez*



I was glancing at the latest monthly Costco magazine issue when a headline really caught my eye. Normally I don't get into it, but the headline just forced me to look inside. It had the usual Costco brand dominating, then the lead title said, "Natural remedy" and "Discover the many health benefits of regular doses of being outdoors." All of this was on top of a simple cartoon graphic depicting a hiker looking into a beautiful canyon lake below a verdant hillside. The gist of the article was about what's being called "Vitamin N" – time in nature. Nature has many natural restorative qualities we can all use to improve both our physical and mental health. In the end, you could easily see that Costco's ad was promoting their travel services, but for me, I drew the link to what we as landscapers, designers, and landscape architects are charged with daily: bringing a bit of nature back into our overly busy lives, on a daily basis.

I can't help but think of the great job we all have in designing, building, creating, and maintaining beautiful environments for the enjoyment of others. One of the primary goals of our work is to create environments where our clients can relax and have restorative time, week in and week out. Realizing we're improving lives is the real cherry on top.

Of course, there are many segments and categories linked to our industry and not all have a simple, straight-line connection to tangible health benefits. But even so, it's not that far of a stretch to promote beautiful interactive landscaping as a form of healthy living and improvement of quality of life.

Now for some shameless means of promoting ourselves, how about these ideas when talking to our potential customers:

- Want to improve your health? Why not start in your own backyard with a beautiful interactive landscape.
- Want to improve your family life? How about firing up the BBQ and having a backyard family get-together in your own customized, award-winning landscape?

These can work well to both promote our sales and solidify our mission. Besides that, if Costco can sell it, this shouldn't be a stretch for landscape contractors.

Just thinking out loud again, this weekend I'll be in my own backyard enjoying some swimming and BBQing, and maybe a little reading and listening to music as well!

Best always, Willie.

**~KURAPIA~**  
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# CLCA Legislative Update

Submitted by CLCA President-Elect, Megan Rios, Rios Design Studio LLC

## Bill Introductions – General Updates:

1. Total AB/SB Bill count in 2021-22 session: 2,623
  - a. Assembly Bills: 1,721
  - b. Senate Bills: 902
  - c. Tracked for CLCA in 2021: 119 as of April 22, 2021
2. April 30 is the deadline for fiscal bills to be reported out of policy committees.
3. May 7, 2021 is the last day for policy committees to meet and report to the floor non-fiscal bills introduced in their house.
4. Friday, June 4, is the house of origin deadline.

## New Priority Bill Issues:

AB 1003 (Lorena Gonzalez-D): Wage Theft/Grand Theft  
This bill would make employer theft of wages, as defined, in an aggregate amount greater than \$950 from one or more employees, punishable as grand theft. Under the bill's definition, "theft of wages" includes any

violation of the law that results in an employee being deprived of wages, benefits, or other compensation due the employee under the law – intentional or not.

**Recommendation: Oppose 2**

SB 606 (Lena Gonzalez-D): Workplace safety: violations of statutes: employer retaliation

This bill expands the authority of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) to issue citations, require abatement, and seek court orders to address violations of workplace safety laws. The bill would allow Cal/OSHA to issue citations based on information collected without ever doing a site visit and establishes a presumption of unlawful retaliation if an employer takes adverse action against an employee within 90 days of when that employee tries to address unsafe working conditions.

**Recommendation: Oppose 2**

*This lobbyist update was detailed at CLCA's Legislative meeting on April 22. Interested in getting involved or learning more about what CLCA is doing on the legislative front? Reach out to CLCA State Director of Legislation, Jay Martinez, at (916) 549-8895.*

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**CLCA MEMBER ADVANTAGE**

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Whether you have a contract dispute or other questions lining up, CLCA's Attorney on Retainer is a helpful resource for answers and solutions.

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# CLCA CONVENTION

November 3-6

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**SAVE THE DATE!** [clca.org/convention](https://clca.org/convention)

# Coming Events

Mark your calendar!

## June 7-11

San Diego Chapter Beautification Awards Judging.

## June 8

**San Diego Chapter General Meeting.** All welcome. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual meeting. To attend, email amy@conradpr.com for the Zoom link.

## August 10

**San Diego Chapter General Meeting.** All welcome. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual meeting. To attend, email amy@conradpr.com for the Zoom link.

## August 19

**San Diego Chapter Educational Seminar, 2 p.m.**  
**Topic: In-line Drip Tubing Best Practices and Design.** All welcome. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual seminar.

## September 11

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

## September 14

**San Diego Chapter General Meeting.** All welcome. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual meeting. To attend, email amy@conradpr.com for the Zoom link.

## September 16

**San Diego Chapter Educational Seminar, 2 p.m.**  
**Topic: Newest Trends in Irrigation and Irrigation Controls.** All welcome. Details to be announced. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual seminar.

## October 12

**San Diego Chapter General Meeting.** All welcome. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual meeting. To attend, email amy@conradpr.com for the Zoom link.

## October 21

**San Diego Chapter Educational Seminar, 2 p.m.**  
**Topic: Rock and Hardscape Design Basics.** All welcome. Due to health guidelines, this will be a virtual seminar.

## November 3-6

**CLCA Convention in Ka'anapali, Maui, Hawaii.**  
Learn more at [www.clcasandiego.org/convention](http://www.clca.org/convention)

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# Circadian Spring

By Pete Dufau, Dufau Landscape

Spring – few other professionals are as coalesced with the season of spring than landscapers. We literally manage the entirety of spring. Flowers, trees budding with leaf break, irrigating, lawns greening up and needing to be mowed weekly are the iconic signals to even the lay person that spring has arrived. It can be perceived by sight, sound, and smell.

However, for those who wake before sunrise, and work till sunset, our senses are attuned to a more planetary change that drives all those other biological indicators that our hemisphere is launching into its period of growth. Daylight length is now equal and dramatically getting longer.

Most people don't realize that the seasonal changes between day and night lengths are NOT linear. The change is parabolic like our earth. At the equinoxes of spring and fall, those light vs. dark changes are happening at their highest rate, over two minutes per day added now or lost at fall. In contrast at the solstices, daytime length is only changing by around 20 seconds. So, we are now gaining two minutes a day, 14 minutes a week, and over

an hour a month of more daylight per day at this time of year! This means that we will have 14 hours and 27 minutes of daylight come June 19, along with a longer lingering twilight at summer solstice.

Add to all this the steroid-like jump brought by Daylight savings and it's hard not to imagine that our souls must be thinking: It's GO Time! For all of us in the green industry it certainly is or soon will be. With all the isolation, our Circadian cycle is loaded like a spring, which is also defined as a device that can launch into action with reserved kinetic energy. It is a time of rebirth and resurrection; it's hard to think that our emergence from COVID at this time of year isn't also part of something larger.

In the coming work craziness, we may not be as self-aware of the rapid changing times, but deep down we feel it more so than those who don't work outside, who don't daily see the emergence of daylight and smell the blossoms. So, may the energy of spring and all that it entails, be a longer lasting light leading us all, to our warmer days ahead. It will be a very special Springtime this year!

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# Quick Guide: Soil Moisture Sensors

By Richard Restuccia, JAIN Irrigation

Precision irrigation improves yields, reduces labor, and conserves water. Using soil moisture meters for irrigation scheduling is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to save water and reduce costs. There are many soil moisture sensors available today, and learning the basic differences between them will make it easier to select the right one for your application.

## Types Of Soil Moisture Sensors

The most common types of soil moisture sensors include gypsum blocks, tension meters, capacitance, volumetric, and neutron probes. These sensors either measure soil tension when placed in the soil or measure volumetric water content.

## Soil Moisture Meters That Measure Tension

These sensors measure tension in the soil and report how much energy it takes plants to pull water from the soil. When there is adequate moisture, it is easier for plants to pull water, and as the soil dries, plants work harder to draw water. The unit of measure is a centibar. When soil is full of water, the soil's tension is close to zero, and as water evaporates, drains and used by plants centibars increase. Depending on the plant and the soil when the centibars reach a specific number, its time to water.

Think of gypsum block soil moisture sensors as two electrodes buried in plaster. When water enters the block of the gypsum, it becomes less resistant. The blocks have two wires extending out of the block and connecting to a handheld reader or data logger. This data logger provides a reading that indicates when to water depending on plants and type of soil. It takes some time for the gypsum to absorb moisture, so there is a lag with these sensors, and they break down over time, so you need to replace them every couple of seasons. They are relatively easy to install and not expensive.

With advocacy, action on upcoming events, and a Company/HR information portal, CLCA is taking action to help you survive the coronavirus pandemic. Visit [www.clca.org/covid](http://www.clca.org/covid) for the most up-to-date information.

## Capacitance Soil Moisture Sensors

These sensors measure water volume in the soil by releasing an electrical charge into the soil, which measures the soil's dielectric constant.

The soil has different dielectric constants based on the amount of water in the soil. This reading happens quickly and can be communicated to Jain Logic software for irrigation scheduling purposes.

## Pros And Cons Of Capacitance Sensors

These sensors are durable, robust, and low maintenance. They also provide soil moisture measurements at various soil depths if you want. You can purchase them in various lengths (great for trees with deep roots) and fix sensors at each 4" section to observe water movement through the soil. Some offer soil temperature and soil salinity as well as fertilizer measurements too. They can be attached to Jain Logic software providing the ability to view soil moisture remotely from any Internet connected device. These devices are more expensive, but the added value you receive more than makes up for the added cost.

## Pros And Cons Of Soil Tension Sensors

Tensiometers are accurate and affordable. Centibars are easy to read on the dial, so it is easy to know when to water. The challenge with them is they require more regular maintenance than common volumetric or capacitance probes. If you miss a refill or refill incorrectly, you will get bad data. Additionally, these devices only have one depth they report from, so to get the same number of readings as the other probes for a 48" root zone, for example, you would have to buy, install and maintain 12 tensiometers at every site you wanted to monitor soil moisture. As you can see, this is not a scalable method of measuring soil moisture over an entire operation like sealed probes are.

Soil moisture sensors provide a window to view water at multiple points in the root zone without having to take multiple samples or using a backhoe or other digging devices to see below the soil surface. We know how much water the soil is holding at any point in time. We track trends over time; every year is different, and even small differences can affect how we choose to irrigate in the coming year.



## Simplify Hardscape Lighting with the LD Ledge Light

The new LD ledge light helps contractors save time on the jobsite. Ideal for walkways, walls, decks, stairs, counters and more, it features an innovative snap-on lens that makes installation and maintenance a breeze.



“Ledge lights are designed to tuck underneath capstones or ledges, making them notoriously difficult to service,” said Sarah Auyeung, Associate Product Manager for FX Luminaire. “With its new snap-on lens feature, the LD ledge light makes installation and maintenance quick and easy.”

### Small Light, Big Benefits

As the smallest ledge light from FX Luminaire, the reliable LD delivers top performance in a compact package.

- No tools are needed to change out the lamp, the wire can be installed in either direction, and routine servicing can be done without disturbing the fixture, wire, or hardscape.
- Two-layer, marine-grade anodization and powder-coat finish offers double protection against corrosion.
- The durable die-cast aluminum fixture comes pre-installed with a 20 W G4 LED lamp (for more light output, a 35 W lamp is available).
- Silicone-encapsulated COB LEDs increase lumen output, reduce heat, prevent water intrusion, and provide better durability than standard LEDs.
- Frosted plastic lens prevents hot spots to deliver a soft glow that beautifully illuminates any setting.

## San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

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

### 10 Year Member

Treebeard Landscape

### 9 Year Member

Landscapes USA

### 6 Year Member

West Coast Turf

### 4 Year Member

Paradise Chevrolet  
Cadillac Buick GMC

### 3 Year Member

Hawthorne Cat

### 2 Year Member

Grace Gordon Designs

## How to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

I don't think 150 years ago our forefathers had any idea that the fuel for their modern technology (electricity, transportation, heat) would be at the forefront of discussion today called “greenhouse gas.” Due to their inventions, it was discovered that fossil fuel, donated by extinct dinosaurs, can be extracted from the depths of the earth with little to no understanding about the carbon footprint left behind for future generations. Today we've noticed a warming trend which concerns us for our future inhabitants.

The atmosphere is what prevents greenhouse gases from escaping to the celestial abyss. However, it's not like we can launch a carbon-free rocket to poke a hole in the atmosphere, release the gases, then sew it up. The question then begs, “What can I (you and me) do about greenhouse gas?” The answer is simple... “plant grass.”

It's time to rally our friends, neighbors, and relatives to grow 2,500 square feet of lawn, which has the leaf density to convert enough oxygen to meet the daily needs of a family of four. Planting grass is a big part of the solution that you and I can do immediately in the global awareness of reducing greenhouse gases.

*This article was excerpted from Southland Sod's website at [www.sod.com](http://www.sod.com).*



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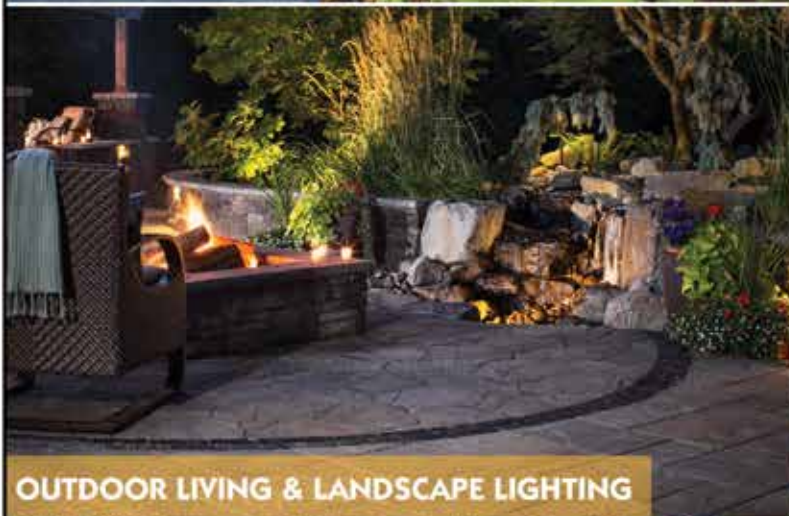


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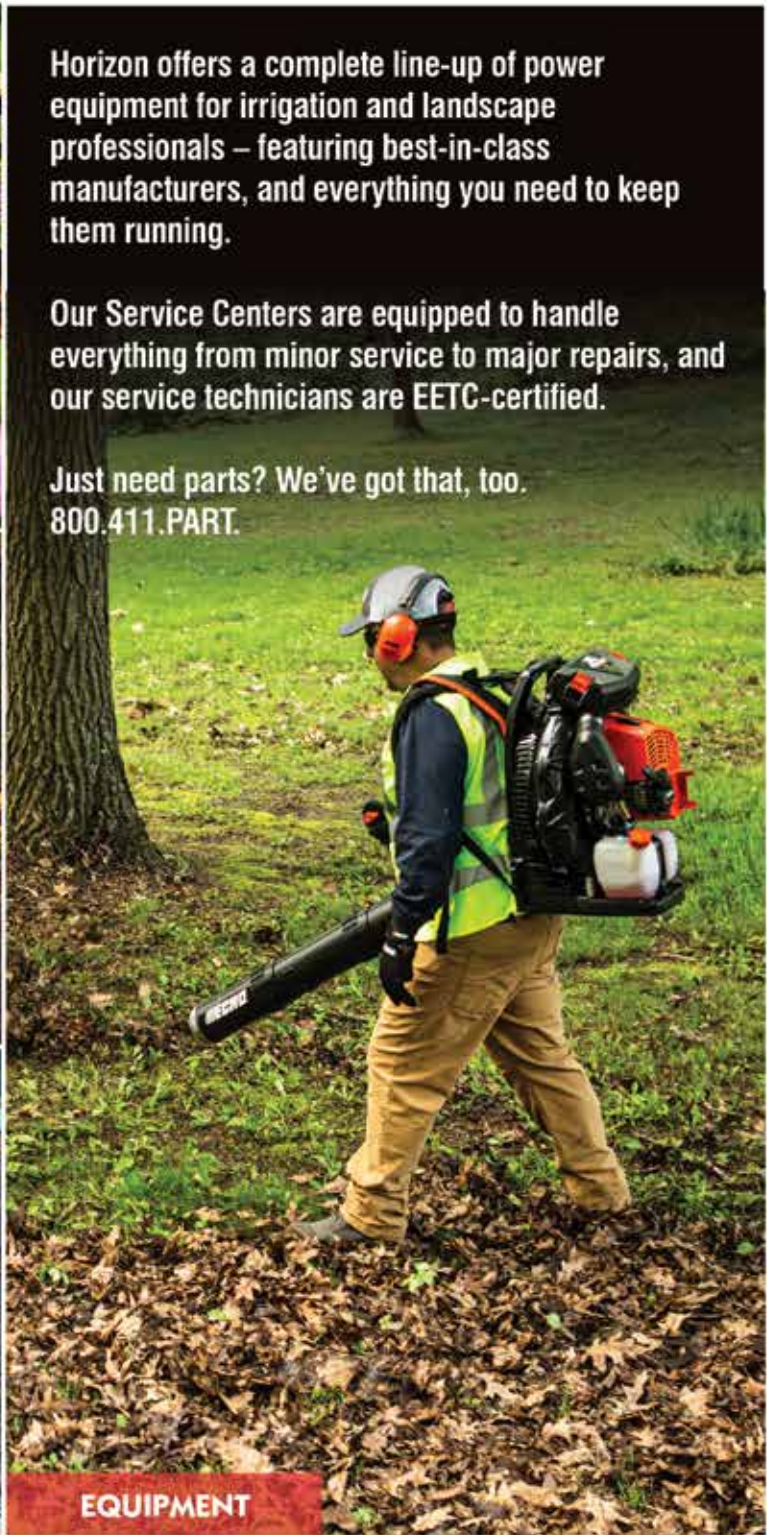
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# San Diego Chapter Golfers Enjoy a Day on the Links at the



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# Annual Golf Tournament May 14 at Rancho Bernardo Inn





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Adding to the fun and games...CLCA State President Paul Hansen (left) and Executive Director Sandra Giarde (third from right) hosted a LandPAC fundraiser during the tournament!

The Offshoot is the official publication of the San Diego Chapter of CLCA. Opinions expressed within the context of this publication are not necessarily those of the CLCA or its members. The Offshoot is designed and printed by Eyescapes, P.O. Box 242, Beaumont, CA 92223. Email: [Bronwyn@eyescapes.net](mailto:Bronwyn@eyescapes.net), phone: (949) 466-1222.

# CLCA San Diego Chapter Life Members

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

Jerrie Beard  
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# 25+ Year CLCA San Diego Chapter Members

Thanks to the following Chapter Members for their continued support for over 25 years.

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