

The Del Conte's Vision



Del Conte's Landscaping, Inc.

(510) 353-6030

www.dclandscaping.com

Notes from Tom



Tom Del Conte
President, Del Conte's
Landscaping, Inc.

A company of rock-solid stability for over 30 years is naturally founded on consistent and unwavering principles. When building anything, be it a building, a bridge, a landscape or even a business, the architecture of the structure is immensely critical. Since founding this company in 1972, I have constantly professed that designing the business architecture is one of the three most important keys to delivering a dependable service machine to the marketplace. At DCL, we know what our company should look like, feel like and smell like. We know our structure and culture. This past winter, we found ourselves short in a few key positions. Some of our clients were understandably a little nervous. Yet, inside our firm, we never wavered from our core principles. Our systems are tried and true to deliver the high level of service our clients expect. We're uncompromising to the character of fine people we select to represent our firm. The temptation and, at times, pressure from clients was to place untested trainees as our representatives prior to sending them through the company boot camp. The discipline to stay our course, to build properly according to our business model, was difficult this winter. However, our resolve continues to be to recruit rigorously and have an exacting training regimen. I'm sure you'll be very pleased to see some new, highly talented positive faces on the DCL team. I am!

Thank you to our clients who believe in our core principles to only deliver quality representatives to our marketplace who are well trained in our company's proven methodology.

Regards,

Tom Del Conte

ARBOR DAY

What better excuse to teach kids a little something about nature than Arbor Day? Here's a great way to do it...encourage them to "adopt" a tree. Choose a tree in your yard or on your street for adoption. Have them draw a picture of the tree, take a bark rubbing and a leaf, and put them in a scrapbook. Look up the tree in a reference book or on the Internet (www.arborday.org is a good site). Then add to the scrapbook new drawings of the tree during the summer, fall and winter to see how it changes throughout the year.

Send us an e-mail and let us know how you plan to celebrate Arbor Day this year, and you just might win a cool prize! Always remember that we can all make a change for the better for our environment.



"Acts of creation are ordinarily reserved for gods and poets. To plant a pine, one need only own a shovel."

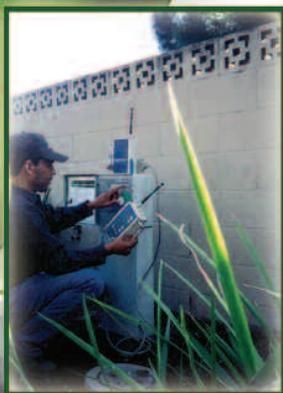
- Aldo Leopold



The Intelligent Use of Water

Water. The Bay Area has a lot of it. However, here are some startling statistics. Two-thirds of the earth is covered with water. Unfortunately, 97% of the earth's water is undrinkable salt water and 2% is glacial ice, leaving 1% of all water on earth as usable for humans.

Earlier this year, leading environmental and water conservation experts convened at the second annual Intelligent Use of Water™ forum in Pasadena, Calif. to discuss water conservation and landscape water use, water conservation policies and legislation, and potential programs and initiatives to bring greater awareness to the need for water conservation. The conference came on the heels of the United Nations report predicting an eminent and devastating global water shortage by the year 2025. Today more than ever, water is becoming a precious commodity - and not just in the Bay Area. Across the country, even around the world, it has become important to use our most precious resource wisely. That is true for our households and especially for irrigating our plants, trees and flowers. Outside irrigation accounts for more than 60% of the urban California water use according to the council.



Del Conte's Landscaping is a pioneer in water conservation tactics. Our firm is unique in our aggressive approach to irrigation management and water conservation. Irrigation under our company's stewardship is attended to by a specifically trained group of specialists who focus only on irrigation service and management. The intense training includes optimizing sprinkler

nozzle selections, timer programming, water distribution uniformity and conservation measures.



The Best Never Rest

Continuing to advance our leadership position in the area of irrigation management, we will assign one of our seasonal college interns the task of tabulating and analyzing water consumption under our stewardship this summer. By engaging this progressive approach, we're confident that we can improve our leadership position within this area. Along with benchmarking our current practices, the technical assistant will poll any leading-edge techniques or programs that may be available to provide value-added elements to our service model.

DCL irrigation specialist using a remote transmitter, which connects to the timer, to efficiently check irrigation.

Working with certain water districts, Del Conte's can help you to implement changes to your irrigation system and possibly qualify you for rebates from the water company. Sounds like a good way to benefit your organization, and more importantly the world's water supply!

The Battle of the Bugs Begins

They're coming, and they're hungry! As weather warms up, so will the battle of the flying, hopping and crawling critters for food. Trees, shrubs, lawns and flowers are what they'll be biting on. As always, keeping your lawn and landscape as healthy as possible is the best way to fight off these destructive pests.

See tips on our Web site at: www.dclandscaping.com.



Del Conte's Hosts Professors Field Day

Impacting future horticulturalists, designers and landscape professionals is always a great honor. Recently, a group of visiting professors from back east selected Del Conte's Landscaping as the Bay Area landscape contractor they would visit on their horticulture expedition. The professors represented prestigious universities such as Purdue, Michigan State, Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee to name just a few. Aware of the DCL reputation, they came to gather insight into the methodology of our company to teach future practitioners.

As part of their ongoing research of the green industry, the professors visited local horticulturalists, nurseries, greenhouses and, of course, one landscape contractor. The professors were thrilled with the information they gathered from Del Conte's Landscaping, just as we were happy to share some of our unique systems. It is our hope that we'll be able to continue this mutually beneficial alliance in an ongoing effort to advance the future of the green industry. According to Dr. Charlie Hall, along with the very substantive information they gleaned, the luncheon we hosted for them put us over the top as one of the best contractors they've visited over the past 10 years.

Tips from the Field

It's starting to warm up, and summer is around the corner. Our seasonal tips section is meant to provide you with a few seasonally sensitive issues for happy gardening. These tips are meant for you to reprint for your group or associations as you wish. All we ask is that you provide appropriate credits to DCL as the author.

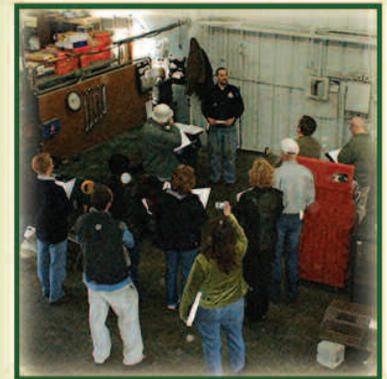
- If olive trees haven't budded yet, be sure to treat them for fruit suppression to prevent those messy olives from tracking into homes. Keep a watchful eye on the olive buds; you may need to re-treat if it appears that buds are developing.
- Make your money grow. We're now in the season of the best growing conditions of the year; plantings will typically experience 60% of their annual growth over the next three to four months. It's a good time to stretch those dollars. During this short window of time, you can get by with planting more one-gallon plants for your dollar and watch them quickly grow into the five-gallon size.
- It's time to raise the mower height. This helps shade the soil and retain moisture, contributing to greener, healthier grass.
- Pools are opening or will soon be opened. Focus now on enhancing those high-traffic pool areas. A little extra detailing of the trees and eye-catching annuals, mulching and even pressure washing in pool areas can provide significantly improved aesthetics around high-profile areas.
- Spiff up those entries and curb appeal areas. As the days become longer, there's much more exposure to the outside landscape. Landscapes are to be enjoyed, so raise the bar for curb appeal.
- Adding mulch to barren areas provides a more aesthetic covering, helps retain important soil moisture and discourages unsightly weeds. Cover those dry, tired areas with a fresh coat of rich-looking mulch.
- Mow ivy beds down to stubble during the spring season to stimulate rapid regrowth of a new-looking bed.

Welcoming the professors to DCL.



Lynee discusses irrigation department processes.

Aaron shows the mechanic's facility.





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Mulch Into Spring!

Seasonal Spring Special on Mulch to Enhance Those Dry, Tired-Looking Planters

Once again, we're gearing up to offer **special spring pricing** on property-enhancing elements. Adding organic mulch to landscape beds provides immediate, intermediate and long-term benefits to the property. Adding organic landscape mulch will cover those dry, tired beds; seriously improve moisture retention; and improve soil structure over time through the introduction of organics that work their way into the soil.

There are a variety of different products to use with different properties and advantages. Your Del Conte's Landscaping representative has an array of sample pouches to help you decide on the mulch type for your property. Most prefer the uniform, dry, non-smelling mulch as it looks a bit better than the horticulturally better fresh, variable-sized and slightly more aromatic organic material. It's less expensive and typically less appealing to the non-horticulturist. However, it has horticultural properties are advantages since it hasn't had all of the nutrients dried from it – and its size will integrate better into the soil.

Ask your DCL representative about the product differences and cost of your preferred product.

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Increase Your Property's Value. Curb Appeal Works!

Statistics show that a well-maintained lawn and landscape can add as much as 15% to the value of your home at resale, so it makes sense to give your home's curb appeal a little boost before putting it on the market.

Shrubs should be pruned and well-shaped, and your lawn should be mowed regularly. Planting beds should be edged, weeded and mulched. Trimming under fences and edging along walks will give your property a more tidy appearance. Annuals can enhance entryways and look great in pots and hanging baskets. And of course, any debris (branches, leaves) should be removed from your yard.

You might be surprised at what a difference it will make!