



Landscape lighting: classy and profitable

Landscape lighting is a sure-fire profit center which will add a finishing touch of class to the customer's property.

By Murray Morrow

■ Landscape lighting, a \$120 million wholesale business, is projected to grow by 10 to 15 percent per year over the next five years.

As more contractors take advantage of this landscape service, they seek the best landscape lighting plans and designs.

Good landscape lighting is as much an art as it is a science. There are few hard and fast rules, but there *are* certain fundamentals that will make the job easier, minimize callbacks and satisfy customers.

For instance, keep the number of fixtures and the amount of light to a minimum. Emphasize what's being lit, not the

light or fixture. More isn't necessarily better. At night it doesn't take much light to create glare.

Ask the customer these questions:

1) What is their primary lighting objective—security, safety, beauty or recreation?

2) What is outstanding about the property—specimen plants; interesting trees, shrubs, statuary? Remember, when you emphasize everything, you emphasize nothing.

3) Will it be necessary to match fixture style to a particular style of architecture?

4) What tone or feeling do you want to achieve—reserved, dramatic or soft?

Use ground spikes and extension cords to temporarily position fixtures. Place fixtures in varying positions until you feel you have found the most aesthetically pleasing arrangement from all possible viewing angles.

Fixture selection—When selecting fixtures, keep in mind:

● **Economics:** Is your customer on a limited budget or does he or she want to

upscale? Obviously, inexpensive \$5 lampholders fit better in a budget job than do \$50 bullet lights.

● **Positioning:** If the fixture is to be aimed above the horizontal, use enclosed and gasketed bullets for the most secure above-horizontal placement. The low-end lampholders are not UL approved for this type of aiming.

● **Shielding:** Whenever possible, use natural shielding such as shrubs and rocks rather than a shield on the fixture. If this is not possible, long-cone bullet fixtures or shielding attachments will serve the purpose.







● **Dayform:** Will fixtures be seen during the daylight hours? If budget is no problem, select fixtures, shapes and colors according to your customer's taste. Usually, more expensive bullets are the most attractive fixtures for projected landscape lighting. If fixtures are not seen, you can use less expensive fixtures.

Types of lighting—Keep in mind what all the viewing angles will be and the effect

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Lighting accessories suppliers

Here are just some of the companies that carry lighting supplies. Products pictured are just one of the many lighting accessories available from each.

Company	Product/description	Circle No.
	Elliptipar, Inc. 145 Orange Ave. West Haven, CT 06516	131
	Hadco A Genlyte Company 100 Craftway Littlestown, PA 17340	132
	Hubbell 2000 Electric Way Christiansburg, VA 24073	133
	Intermatic Intermatic Plaza Spring Grove, IL 60081	134
	McPhilben Outdoor Lighting 2661 Alvarado St. San Leandro, CA 94577	135
	Stonco Lighting A Genlyte Company 2345 Vauxhall Rd. Union, NJ 07083	136

'Light up your landscape'

■ The American Lighting Association is a non-profit trade organization representing members of the residential and commercial lighting industry in the U.S. and Canada. It publishes "Light Up Your Landscape," a 16-page booklet describing the benefits and types of outdoor lighting available to landscapers.

For a copy, send \$2 to American Lighting Association, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611-4067.

"Handbook for Outdoor Lighting," for the professional 12-volt outdoor lighting requirement, is available from Nightscaping, of Redlands, California. Send \$3 to Loran, Inc.,

Placement techniques

● **Single light source**, placed directly in front of the object. If it is a plant and somewhat open, allowing light to pass through and project shadows on a surface behind it, the effect can be sensational.

● **To either side of the object**. This will create distorted shadows that are very often dramatic and intensely interesting because of the extremely high contrast created.

● **Multiple point sources**. Two or more light sources from different sides of an object—sides and front; front and back—can create interesting highlights and shadows.

● **Downlighting**. This positioning tends to smooth and soften the lighting's

tone. It is desirable in security lighting where it is essential to minimize contrasts. But in landscape lighting, its effect is often bland and boring.

● **Uplighting** produces the starkest, most dramatic effect, described as mysterious, intriguing or exotic.

● **Backlighting**. Lighting the backside of a tree or shrub will make the object seem to "jump out" of its setting.

● **Silhouetting**. Lighting a surface from behind will help to emphasize the shape and dis-

tinctive character of a particular shrub or tree in the landscape.

—M.M.



Uplighting produces dramatic effects.

Buried utilities hidden, hazardous

Installers/excavators are always just 'one call' away from learning the whereabouts of below-ground utilities.

■ When Ken and his partner contracted to landscape the elderly woman's front yard, they also agreed to replace a paved walkway with a decorative stone walkway.

The winding stone entrance would be the finishing touch to an otherwise routine landscape installation. But, because they gave too little thought to what lay *under* the old, root-buckled walkway, they lost the profits from this job. It also required one extra day to complete the work.

They didn't call before they starting digging. Here's how they goofed:

They had agreed to remove from the front of her house, one sprawling, but rarely blooming lilac, and three scruffy boxwoods. These they replaced with two flowering crabs, a weeping cherry, ivy ground cover, and mulch. Small job, easily done.

But in attempting to slice through the

roots of a 60-year-old silver maple—to lay the paving stones of the new walkway—they cut into the natural gas line to the woman's house.

Typically, this isn't the way most underground utilities are damaged. More commonly, they're punctured with a backhoe.

To prevent this sometimes dangerous but always expensive confrontation between machinery and below-ground utility, the 25,000-member American Public Works Association (APWA), through its Utility Location and Coordination Council, promotes *One-Call*, a communication link between excavators and owners/operators of buried utilities.

Most states now have laws requiring public utilities with underground facilities to participate in a One-Call excavation protection service. Only three states—Hawaii, North Dakota and South Dakota—don't have One-Call system coverage.

For instance, had Ken dialed (800) 362-2764, the One-Call operation manned by the Ohio Utilities Protection Service, someone from Columbia Gas would have marked the location of the gas line with yellow paint—prior to any digging.

Had there been any other underground facilities at the digging site, the respective

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of the beam after it projects beyond the lighted object.

Guard against light shining into a neighbor's window or into oncoming traffic.

● **Area or spread lighting**. This is ideal for safety lighting of paths and walkways. It is also excellent for flower beds and low level shrubbery. It is generally provided by low level fixtures that are often shielded by a top louver or cover.

● **Accent lighting**. Highlighting statues, exotic shrubbery and a specimen plant will often add a dramatic and interesting tone to a landscape lighting job.

● **Facade lighting**. Textured house surfaces like brick, weathered wood, split shakes, barn siding, when effectively lighted add character, depth and dimension.

● **Grazing**. Mounting the fixture just inches from the surface and aiming up at a very close angle can produce intense, highly provocative effects.

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operators would have also marked them with these standard colors:

- Electric—red
- Gas, oil—yellow
- Communication—orange
- Water—blue
- Sewer—green
- Proposed construction—white

Most One-Call systems, including Ohio's, require at least two working days' notice prior to digging. This is just one of several One-Call requirements that may be slightly different from state to state.

"In the landscape business, there should definitely be awareness of these One-Call systems," says Jim Thorne, director of research of APWA. In the case of a business that operates locally, employees may have to be aware of just the single One-Call number. For companies working in several states, there are separate numbers for each state.

Each year the APWA publishes its Excavator's Damage Prevention Guide and One-Call Systems Directory International. It contains listings and requirements for all One-Call systems. Cost is \$3. Contact: APWA, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago, IL 60637-2881.

—Ron Hall