

10 BRIGHT lighting tips



Painting with light adds value to landscapes by giving them beauty after the sun goes down. It also increases security and safety for homeowners.

Increase your residential customers' enjoyment of their outdoor surroundings by providing professional outdoor lighting. Outdoor lighting increases security and safety. But it can also add beauty and mystery to gardens, pools, decks and patios—in all seasons.

Some contractors refer to this as landscape lighting and, indeed, they do illuminate trees and shrubs. But they also light driveways, steps, entrances and other parts of properties.

Here are 10 landscape lighting tips from Clay Martenies, vice president sales of California Landscape Lighting:

1) Never allow a lamp to shine directly into the eyes. If the effect you select will produce this, use another angle. If this is not possible, use another way to light.

2) Don't over-light. Allow the dark areas to accent what you light by varying amount of light, or not lighting everything.

3) Let the airports have the "runway" lights. Place your path-

lights where they are the most effective without being too uniform.

4) Consider glare. Shield fixtures so glare is controlled, especially on an elevating path. Select fixtures that will keep the lamp glare from the eye as the path ascends.

5) Don't be boring. Mix up the effects. If the trees are too small to downlight, use backlighting and/or silhouetting instead of all front uplighting.

6) Never allow any normal voltage drop to be noticeable by the naked eye. Lay out the cable runs to prevent this.

7) Don't doom your fixtures. Few fixtures are designed to stand up to a string trimmer or mower.

8) Allow room. You may want to add fixtures or upgrade lamps to a new system.

9) Never install a fixture that will be overgrown by the foliage. Select a fixture that will still be effective when surrounding plants are mature. If this isn't possible, have a plan to replace the fixture when the plants are mature.

10) Don't place or install fixtures where it's overly difficult to relamp. Consider the next person who must climb the tree with a screwdriver in hand. □

—These tips appeared in the winter 1996 issue of California Landscape Lighting's newsletter, Lite Tips. For more information, write: California Landscape Lighting, 31260 Cedar Valley Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91362.

