

My column concerning certification in the Oct. 98 issue of LM riled a few of you. It got your dander up and you let me know it. Some of you let me know that you agreed with what I wrote.

Thanks for your comments, both pro and con.

"Certifying landscapers should be used as a tool to separate informed, quality-minded companies from the rest of the competition," wrote Rick Poro, owner Cutting Edge Landscape, Hampton, VA, in response to the column. *"What gets us is the amount of 'scab' landscapers who don't register with the city, pay withholding, state and federal taxes, and on and on. Because of this they can lowball jobs, bringing down prices and quality."*

Jim Park, grounds manager for Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA, likewise feels that certification is a good tool against unscrupulous workers. *"This industry is long overdue for a way to measure the degree of competency of people working in this field,"* he wrote, in

part. *"I think certification is a great idea. It's good enough for most industries—why not ours?"*

Jones C. Abernethy III, a licensed landscape architect and contractor, added these thoughts: *"Protection of the public health, safety and general welfare is the primary goal of any licensure or certification program. The alternative to licensure and certification is that anyone can get \$25 worth of business cards printed and say that they are a 'professional' (fill in the blank) and go out and infect themselves on the public."*

"Any profession that does not wholeheartedly support certification and licensure as minimum requirements for practice is a profession not worthy of the name. Regarding education? Everyone gets educated a little bit every day as they go about their jobs. Just who is responsible for educating the jack-

legs, fly by nights and incompetents? The customers, inspectors, landscape architects? I don't think so.

"Certification is not 'a gate to keep competitors out.' Certification is one way to protect the public from incompetent practitioners. The success of an industry is to have people doing good work and satisfying their customers."

We appreciate all of your comments and plan to explore the issue of certification in more depth in future issues. **LM**

Agree? Disagree? Contact Ron at 440/891-2636; fax 440/891-2683; e-mail rhall@advanstar.com

You speak out loud and clear



Ron Hall

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[PEOPLE & PROJECTS]

Janssen heads Stiles Landscape

Joseph E. Janssen, CLP, took over as president of Stiles Landscape Service Co., Fort Lauderdale, FL. Janssen, the former owner of his own landscape firm also served as a regional manager for ISS during his 15 years in the industry. Stiles Landscape Service is a division of Stiles Corporation, a full-service commercial real estate development and investment company.

Vollmer Associates lands East Boston project

Vollmer Associates is providing the engineering and landscape architectural services for the rehabilitation of Constitution Beach, a 28-acre recreational breach facility in East Boston, MA. The project involves rehabilitating the beach with 3,7600 cu. yds. of clean sand, replacing a pedestrian bridge and developing a small urban park. The \$4.5-million project should take about 18 months.

Gardener's Guild honored

Gardener's Guild, Inc., San Rafael, CA, earned a 1998 Waste Reduction Award for its program to recycle grass clippings and landscape waste. President and CEO Linda Novy said the company made "great strides in converting our waste stream to resource recovery" with help from its 200 Bay area clients.