

DASHBOARD



ValleyCrest's safest employees win trucks

ValleyCrest Landscape Cos., Calabasas, Calif., celebrated its 2012 National Safety Awareness Day by presenting new work trucks to four of its safest employees. It was the featured part of safety events the company held across the country, where more than 10,000 employees gathered to recognize superior performance in workplace safety.

"ValleyCrest's commitment to safety began when the company was founded more than 63 years ago. To this day, ensuring employees go home safe every night remains our top priority," says Roger Zino, ceo of ValleyCrest.

That's a demanding task that requires diligence and attention to details every day. In a typical day, ValleyCrest crews are out on the road in more than 4,400 trucks, pulling more than 2,500 trailers to thousands of cus-

tomers job sites where they'll operate some 9,000 pieces of equipment.

This year marks the 10th year that ValleyCrest has awarded new trucks, during which time 51 trucks have been given to workers. Since 2002, the company's overall claims (at-fault, auto liability claims and OSHA recordable workers compensation claims) have decreased 50 percent.

This year, a record 4,600 employees across four different U.S. safety regions were eligible to enter a drawing for a new truck. To qualify, full-time field employees must complete one year of service with no accidents and be employed by a branch that meets or exceeds the company's threshold safety standards.

The four new truck winners for 2012 include:



From left: Frank Esqueda, regional safety manager; Mike Scully, ValleyCrest regional manager; truck winner Angel Hernandez-Ayala, ValleyCrest gardener in Phoenix; and Dave Hanson, ValleyCrest senior vice president.

- Domingo Cruz Hernandez, a crew leader in the maintenance division in Palo Alto, Calif.,
- Angel Hernandez-Ayala, a gardener in the maintenance division in Phoenix,
- Amelia Lopez, a gardener in the maintenance division in Tampa, Fla.; and
- Jose M. Carrillo, a crew leader in the maintenance division in Delray Beach, Fla.

Know before you tow

Towing capability is an important consideration when choosing a truck for a Green Industry business. Here's a handy guide to towing lingo, courtesy of Ram Trucks' Ram Zone blog (blog.ramtrucks.com/ram-technology/know-your-tow/).

Gross Combined Vehicle Weight (GCWW) is the total combined weight of a fully loaded vehicle, including passengers, payload and everything in tow.

Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) is the total weight of a fully loaded vehicle, including passengers and payload—but excluding all towing.

Gross Trailer Weight (GTW) is the total weight of the trailer plus all the cargo in it.

Curb Weight is the weight of a vehicle without any passengers or cargo, but including all necessary fuel, fluids and standard equipment.

Axle Ratio is the ratio between the revolutions per minute of the driveshaft and the rear axle. In general, a



higher number offers more towing power; a lower number offers better engine efficiency.

Trailer Tongue Weight is the downward force exerted on the hitch ball by the trailer coupler. In most cases, it should fall between 10 percent to 25 percent of GTW.

The **Hitch Assembly** is mounted to the tow vehicle (most often to the vehicle frame) and includes a hitch receiver, ball mount adapter, hitch ball and wiring harness.

A **Goose Neck Hitch** is a Class V hitch mounted in the bed of a pickup truck, over the rear axle. The trailer connects to a ball socket with a pivoted coupling arm.

The **Fifth Wheel Hitch** is a heavy-duty trailer hitch that mounts inside the bed of a pickup truck. Instead of using a ball hitch, the trailer attaches via a coupling king pin that locks into a large horseshoe-shaped plate.

A **Locking Differential** restricts the rotational speed of both wheels on an axle. Compared to open differentials, locking differentials are designed to offer increased traction on uneven surfaces.