

To Whom It May Concern:

Tree Care Enterprises, Inc. has been a member of the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association (ILCA) since December 11, 1990. They are members in good standing for the period July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. ILCA is the only state professional organization exclusively for landscape contractors. Tree Care Enterprises, Inc. asked that I present this letter on why using a reputable contractor should take some of the guesswork out of your search for a landscape professional.

In the past few years, due to the low barriers of entry into the profession, many companies have sprung up that operate for cash, cut corners, or do not possess the proper licenses and insurance. Many consumers have been wooed by the lower prices these companies can offer. ILCA understands the need to save money during difficult times, but there is a big difference between being prudent and being reckless.

There are dangers to using a contractor who does not operate a legal business. For example:

- The property owner, not the contractor, is responsible for injuries or damage if the contractor does not carry the proper insurance.
- If the contractor does not possess a pesticide applicator's license and applies chemicals, the project may be shut down.
- If the contractor does not possess a Nursery Dealer's Certificate through the Illinois Department of Agriculture, the project may be shut down.
- If the company does not comply with federal and state labor laws, the project may be shut down.

Enclosed is a checklist that you and your landscape company should complete together. This should guide your decision as you choose a landscape company.

Best of luck in your search for a landscape professional – the only investment that grows over time.

Regards,



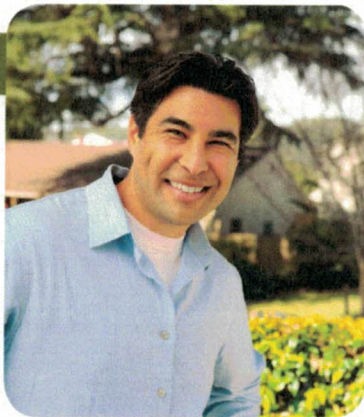
Scott Grams, Executive Director, ILCA





THE INFORMED Consumer

HOW TO HIRE A LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR



Finding a landscape contractor is not a difficult task, but assessing the qualifications and business practices of an individual or a company can require substantial effort on the part of the consumer. The State of Illinois and most of its municipalities do not define nor regulate the work of landscape contractors, which puts the burden of responsibility and risk on the consumer.

Consumers in Illinois can look to the **Illinois Landscape Contractors Association (ILCA)**

to find qualified, reputable and insured professionals providing all manner of landscape and exterior services. Through the ILCA, members obtain training and continuing education in both technical and business skills to enhance their business practices and the professionalism of their employees. The more than 800-member firms across the state have unparalleled access to research, publications and product information, as well as an open-line of communication to product manufacturers, educators and researchers.

How We Stand Apart

- We are members of the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association.
- We carry workers compensation insurance and business liability insurance appropriate to our operation, and for the entire duration of the project.
- We are appropriately licensed to do the type of work proposed in your community.
- We comply with all state and federal labor laws.
- We employ state-licensed pesticide applicators to apply chemicals when necessary.
- We employ staff who are properly trained and qualified to operate the machinery used.
- We provide a written estimate that details the cost of your improvement, the materials being used, and our contractual obligations.
- We can provide a portfolio of our work as well as references.
- We have a Landscape Industry Certified professional on staff.



WHAT CAN AN ILCA MEMBER DO FOR YOU?

CONSTRUCTION

- Plant Installation
- Retaining Walls
- Excavating & Grading
- Carpentry & Decks
- Landscape Lighting
- Stone, Brick & Concrete Masonry
- Fences & Gates
- Green Roofs & Walls
- Patios, Driveways, Walks
- Irrigation Systems
- Erosion/Flood Control

HORTICULTURE

- Tree Care/Arborist
- Soil Preparation
- Weed, Insect & Disease Control
- Nursery Sales
- Ecological Plantings

MAINTENANCE

- Lawn Mowing
- Weeding, Fertilizing, Core Aerating
- Pruning
- Mulching
- Spring & Fall Clean-Up
- Annuals & Containers
- Holiday Lighting
- Snow Removal

DESIGN

- Site Analysis
- Outdoor Kitchens & Living Areas
- Vegetable and Perennial Gardens
- Sport Courts
- Pools & Spas
- Water Features
- Fireplaces & Fire Pits

