



# North Coast Journal

CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

North Coast Chapter

**2019  
HOLIDAY PARTY**  
Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>

@  
**Suite D in Sonoma**  
21800 Schellville Rd  
6:00 PM

Gourmet Dinner from  
The Girl & the Fig

\$85

★ Bar Included



*We will also be installing the new 2020 North Coast Board of Directors that night.*

### *Menu served Family Style*

**Passed Hors d'oeuvres** - goat cheese & lavender honey toasts - sesame seared tuna, coconut cilantro vinaigrette - alsatian onion tartlets - house-made bacon, crispy sage

**Family Style Autumn-Winter Entrees** - pan-seared local black cod - grilled winter vegetables - agrodolce beef filet butternut squash gratin - wild mushrooms - red wine-shallot reduction (**Vegetarian Entrée Available Upon Request**)

**Plated Desserts** - brioche fig bread pudding~ caramel sauce

RSVP to Connie by Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup>  
[heyconniesalinas@hotmail.com](mailto:heyconniesalinas@hotmail.com) (707) 217-2139



## NORTH COAST CHAPTER EVENTS

December 7th .....Holiday Party @ Suite D in Sonoma (back by popular demand)  
January 21<sup>st</sup> .....Educational Dinner Meeting to Be Announced

## FIRESCAPE – FIRE WISE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

“When a wildfire comes through your neighborhood, could your house survive on its own?” A dramatic question, but one we need to consider when living in an environment where wildfire is a common occurrence.

“Firescaping” is landscape design that reduces house and property vulnerability to wildfire. The goal is to develop a landscape with a design and choice of plants that offers the best fire protection and enhances the property. The ideal is to surround the house with things that are less likely to burn. It is imperative when building homes in wildfire-prone areas that fire safety be a major factor in landscape design. Appropriate manipulation of the landscape can make a significant contribution toward wildfire survival.



### Preparing for Wildfires with **FIRESCAPING**

Firescape integrates traditional landscape functions and a design that reduces the threat from wildfire. It does not need to look much different than a traditional design. In addition to meeting a homeowner’s aesthetic desires and functional needs, such as entertaining, playing, storage and erosion control, firescape also includes vegetation modification techniques, planting for fire safety, defensible space principles and use of fire safety zones.

Through proper plant selection, placement and maintenance, we can diminish the possibility of ignition, lower fire intensity, and reduce how quickly a fire spreads, thereby increasing a home’s survivability. In firescaping, plant selection is primarily determined by a plant’s ability to reduce the wildfire threat. Other considerations may be important, such as appearance, ability to hold the soil in place, and wildlife habitat value. The traditional foundation planting of junipers is not a viable solution in a firescape design. Minimize use of evergreen shrubs and trees within 30 feet of a structure, because junipers, other conifers and broadleaf evergreens contain oils, resins, and waxes that makes these plants burn with great intensity. Use ornamental grasses and berries sparingly because they also can be highly flammable. Choose “firewise” plants. These are plants with a high moisture content. They are low growing. Their stems and leaves are not resinous, oily or waxy. Deciduous trees are generally more fire resistant than evergreens because they have a higher moisture content when in leaf, but a lower fuel volume when dormant.

Placement and maintenance of trees and shrubs is as important as actual plant selection. When planning tree placement in the landscape, remember their size at maturity. Keep tree limbs at least 15 feet from chimneys, power lines and structures. Specimen trees can be used near a structure if pruned properly and well irrigated.

Firescape design uses driveways, lawns, walkways, patios, parking areas, areas with inorganic mulches, and fences constructed of nonflammable materials such as rock, brick, or cement to reduce fuel loads and create fuel breaks. Fuel breaks are a vital component in every firescape design. Water features, pools, ponds or streams can be used also as fuel breaks. Areas where wildland vegetation has been thinned or replaced with less flammable plants are the traditional fuel break. Remember, while bare ground is an

*Continued on next page.....*



effective fuel break, it is not generally recommended as a firescape element due to aesthetic, soil erosion, and other concerns.

A home located on a brushy site above a south or west facing slope will require more extensive wildfire safety landscape planning than a house situation on a flat lot with little vegetation around it. Boulders and rocks become fire retardant elements in a design. Whether or not a site can be irrigated will greatly influence location of hardscape (concrete, asphalt, wood decks, etc.), plant selection and placement. Prevailing winds, seasonal weather, local fire history, and characteristics of native vegetation surrounding the site are additional important considerations.

The 30 feet closest to a structure will be the highest water use area in the fire wise landscape. This is an area where highly flammable fuels are kept to a minimum and plants are kept green throughout the fire season. Use well-irrigated perennials here. Another choice is low growing or non-woody deciduous plants. Lawn is soothing visually, and is also practical as a wildfire safety feature. But extensive areas of turfgrass may not be right for everyone. Some good alternatives include clover, groundcovers, and conservation grasses that are kept green during the fire season through irrigation. Rock mulches are good choices. Patios, masonry and rock planters are excellent fuel breaks and increase wildfire safety. Be creative with boulders, riprap, dry streambeds and sculptural inorganic elements. When designing a landscape for fire safety remember, less is better. Simplify visual lines and groupings. A fire wise landscape lets plants and garden elements reveal their innate beauty by leaving space between plants and groups of plants. In firescaping, the open spaces are more important than the plants.

*save the date*

# Nor Cal Landscape & Nursery Show

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**Connie Salinas**

P.O. Box 1621  
Sebastopol, CA 95473  
Phone 707-217-2139  
[heyconniesalinas@hotmail.com](mailto:heyconniesalinas@hotmail.com)



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## CLCA North Coast Chapter A Message from the Education Chair



This is the time of year to be thankful, the harvest is in and the holidays are coming. By now we pretty much know how we did for the year, and I would say for the most part, we all did well.

I in particular have something to be thankful for, and it is our Education Program, our Education Committee, and our Educational trainers. We have evolved into the best training program in the State amongst CLCA Chapters. Every other Chapter wishes that they had a program like the North Coast Chapter has.

As a matter of fact, the **North Coast Chapter's Education Program is going to be the model for the Certification Test replacement.** When NALP decided to cancel all hands on testing, CLCA put their heads together to decide what we could do to replace a program that was well respected and supported. Everyone felt that the CLT Program was a very good thing for the landscape Industry.

So we decided to offer training as the follow up to testing. It's a natural. The former judges would love to train the applicants, they wanted to do it so bad, but they weren't allowed. Now they can train all they want. A task force is meeting in Lake Tahoe at the CLCA Convention on November 13 to 16 to review the first classes to be offered.

2019 was a year where we planned to offer five training Saturdays. The First was an advanced irrigation class where we offered training in smart controllers, decoder & 2-wire, irrigation components & principles, and sub-surface drip. This class brought in almost 50 students eager to learn more about irrigation, and they got what they came for. The smart controller class was taught by **John Buchholz of J B Builders** in Marin County, and **Eduardo Vigil of Horizon Irrigation** in Santa Rosa. This class features the Hunter HCC Hydrowise smart controller. Next we had a decoder and 2-wire class taught by **Chris Stewart of Bertotti Landscaping**. Irrigation components & principles was taught by **Andrew Johnson of Johnson's Tree and Garden Service** of Marin County, and **A J de Lopez of DeLopez Landscaping** of Santa Rosa. And last we offered sub-surface drip taught by **Lou Penning of Lou Penning Landscape** in Napa, and **Salvador Ledesma of Gardenworks** in Sonoma County. Thank you Ladies & Gentlemen.

Our next offering was in maintenance, which brought over 40 students. All students and trainers received breakfast and all the tacos they could eat. Our first class was in big mowers and was taught by **Alberto Hernandez of Special Gardens** in San Mateo. Next we offered pruning taught by the master arborist **Andrew Johnson of Johnson's Tree and Garden Service**. Next we had fertilizers & pesticides taught by **Denis Donlan of Johnson's Tree & Garden Service** of Marin County. Finally we offered controller programming taught by **Chris Stewart of Bertotti Landscaping** in Petaluma. Thank you Gentlemen.

*Continued on next page.....*

Our next planned class was on irrigation essentials, where we were offering trencher, valve repair & head adjustment, mainline & backflow, & application of water. Unfortunately, not many signed up, so a decision was made to cancel the class. I didn't want the trainers to give up a whole day for a few students. However, I regret that decision, and I apologize to the Chapter.

Our next training was on construction, and the students got their money's worth. We featured instrument & grading taught by **John Buchholz of J B Builders** in Marin County, and **Gelacio Herrera of PDM Landscape** in Sonoma County. Next we held a class on tractors, and **Garton Tractor** stepped up to give us the use of four (4) machines, 2 track loaders & 2 excavators, taught by **Will Jenkel of Garton Tractor**, **Norberto Bonilla of Case Tractor** and **Andrew Johnson of Johnson's Tree and Garden Service** in Marin County. We also offered a class on paver installation on sand taught by **Reyes deLopez of DeLopez Landscaping** in Sonoma County, and Eduardo Vigil of Horizon Irrigation in Sonoma County. Finally we had a class on plan reading and layout taught buy our own President **Lou Penning of Lou Penning Landscape** in Napa. Thank you Gentlemen.

The fifth class we intended to offer was on lighting, but due to other classes on lighting already offered this year, we decided not to do our own class on lighting.

Our Education Committee consists of myself, Henry Buder of Henry Buder's Landscape Restoration, Chris Stewart of Bertotti Landscape, Salvador Ledesma of Garden Works Landscape, John Buchholz of J B Builders, Andrew Johnson of Johnson's Tree and Garden Service, Will Jenkel of Garton Tractor, A J de Lopez of De Lopez Landscaping, Joe Detlor of Oxbow Pool & Landscaping, Eduardo Vigil of Horizon, Lou Penning of Lou Penning Landscape, Tom Campbell of Water Scout, Connie Salinas our NCC Executive Administrator, and Tony Bertotti of Bertotti Landscape in Petaluma. Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.

**And finally I am thankful for Tony and Kim Bertotti for letting the North Coast Chapter use their property to do this training.** Without their support the training may not be possible. And I am thankful for their Friendship. Let's do it again next year, count me in.

**Henry Buder**



Henry Buder is the kingpin to the success of the North Coast Chapter's Training Program. We are so fortunate to have his wisdom, his knowledge and his unwavering dedication to educating green industry employees. He touches every aspect of this program in some way.

**Thank you Henry!!! You are our chapter's very own ROCK STAR!! ~ Connie Salinas**

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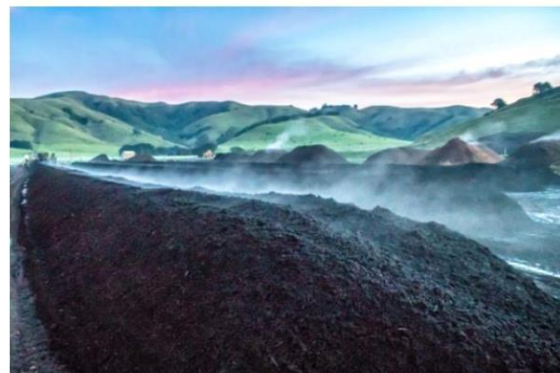
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West Marin Compost has been in business since 2011. The company was founded on the premise that organic feedstocks produced in west Marin County should be processed locally, creating valuable amendments for local soils. Working closely with the [Marin Carbon Project](#), it has been established that compost produced at the facility can play a crucial role in carbon sequestration (see North Coast CLCA Journal, October 2019).

West Marin Compost was initiated as public private partnership between the Marin Resource Conservation District and owners Kevin and Nancy Lunny, well respected West Marin residents. Jeff Creque, agroecologist, helped them set up WMC based on his understanding that locally recycled organics can help build healthy soils and positively impact climate change. Jeff is a co-founder of the Marin Carbon Project and a Director at the [Carbon Cycle Institute](#), where he provides senior leadership on carbon farming and land management. In 2015, Will Bakx, soil scientist and formerly owner and manager of Sonoma Compost as well as adjunct instructor at the SRJC Sustainable Agriculture Program, joined the team to develop products that the North Bay has come to expect.

West Marin Composts include low nitrogen blends suitable for plants such as natives, as well as higher nitrogen blends perfect for flowering annuals and vegetables. We are now also producing a product co-composted with biochar that will help increase water holding capacity in sandy soils, increase cation exchange capacity and functions as a habitat for beneficial soil microorganisms.

West Marin Compost produces a wide variety of mulches as well. Marin Vineyard Mulch is a product of choice for landscapers. It does not float, adds nutrients to the soil over time, and is a perfect host for beneficial fungi to build soil structure. Other mulches include Tree Mulch, Ultra-Light Mulch and more.



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— Taylor Boyle, Purlieu Landscapes

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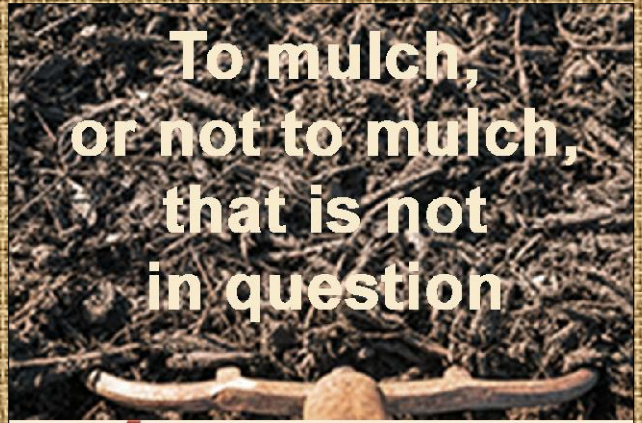
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## Guidelines on Complying with California Stormwater Regulations for Landscape Contractors



Landscape contractors and members of the green industry should have a special connection to water quality. Contractors particularly should be aware of the law, understand the best management practices and how to apply them, know how their operations can contribute pollutants, and be able to manage their activities and employees. Landscape contractors should be proactive, not reactive. Staying in compliance and making a difference doesn't always mean spending dollars. Sometimes it's just a matter of having pride in what we do.

These guidelines are intended to provide a range of general information about stormwater quality best management practices and related issues faced by landscape contractors on job sites in California. These guidelines do not address site-specific applications or the entire scope of federal, state and local regulations. Landscape contractors must consult with a stormwater professional to determine the applicability of the information provided for any general use or site-specific purposes.

Users of these guidelines assume all liability directly or indirectly arising from using this information.

CLCA once again thanks David Franklin, CPESC, stormwater management services trainer for [EnviroTech NPDES](#), for helping update his 2007 draft of this document.

### [CLCA Stormwater Guidance for the Landscape Industry](#) **The History**

On June 23, 1969, the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland caught on fire. For over 100 years, this river and others in industrialized areas ignited on occasion. Rivers served as sewer systems for industrial and human waste. Local authorities were generally powerless against the polluters as there were few legal mechanisms in place. During the 1960's, the ecology movement was growing, images of this flaming river embarrassed the nation, Randy Newman wrote the song, "Burn on Big River". Within a few years, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was formed and Congress passed the Clean Water Act (CWA).

*Continued on next page...*



## The Law

The Clean Water Act is a long and complex law that regulates discharges into waters of the US. The goal of this legislation was to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The CWA prohibits "the discharge of any pollutant by any person." While this is not an achievable goal, the result of the law was to require that discharges of pollutants be done under a federal permit, administered under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Initially, the CWA targeted wastewater discharges: wastewater leaving the pipes of factories and Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTWs) and being dumped into waterways. Eventually, stormwater washing off of urban areas from municipalities, industrial/commercial and construction sites was recognized as a significant source of pollutants. The ongoing discovery of the types and sources of pollution and the prioritization and implementation of solutions has guided the growth of new regulations meant to improve the quality of the nation's waters.

Federal law requires that each state identifies the beneficial uses of waters in the state (drinking, tourism, transportation, natural habitat, commercial uses, swimming etc.). Most states, including California are authorized to administer the NPDES program on behalf of the EPA in order to protect the beneficial uses. In California, the authority to regulate stormwater runoff under the NPDES system has been delegated to the State Water Resources Control Board and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards. The Water Board writes permits (called General Permits) in a variety of categories. Categories include: **heavy industry** such as transportation (airports, railroads), **municipalities** (cities, counties, schools, prisons etc.) having separate storm sewer systems (separate from sanitary sewers and hence the term "municipal separate storm sewer systems" [MS4s]) and **construction sites** disturbing over one acre of land. These entities "ask permission" to sign on to the permit covering its activities and the discharges that result. Additionally, Individual Permits are written for facilities with unique operations (a power company discharging thermally elevated waters used for cooling). The law requires that it be the owner who seeks coverage under the appropriate permit. The owner is then responsible for sub-tier workers.

Permits for municipalities are tailored for that particular urban area while following a standard template meant to ensure that all municipal permits address common concerns. Smaller and more rural municipalities are allowed to operate without gaining permit coverage for the time being. Statewide, all construction sites having an acre or more of disturbance are required to gain coverage under one General Construction Permit which is based on the commonalities that construction projects share. The site conditions and information specific to each project are addressed in a document called a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP); it is meant to be guidance for all operators on the site and so all operators should be familiar with it.

## The Fines

Significant monetary fines exist. Anyone contributing to environmental pollution may end up sharing a part of the fine. Regulators prefer to be "compliance assistors", but when they respond to a citizen's complaint of an illegal discharge, their mindset may be more, "the learning curve is over, when is this stuff going to end?" Fine amounts have been growing as has been the inclusion of lower-tier subs in the citation process.

## The Process

Landscape contractors will probably discover that their activities are regulated by two different permits: a municipal MS4 permit and a construction permit. MS4 permits require that the municipality monitors commercial operations for activities that may be contributing to pollution: **restaurants** washing greasy mats and allowing the wash water to flow to the storm drain, **auto parts stores** where customers change their oil in the parking lot and then rain carries spilled oil to the gutter and **landscape contractors** who store broken bags of fertilizer without protective cover, thus allowing the eventual migration of nutrients to the creeks,

*Continued on next page...*



lakes and ocean. So, landscapers need to monitor their operation yard, vehicles and jobsites for ways to eliminate or reduce activities and practices that contribute to pollution.

Landscapers who work on projects disturbing an acre or more are required to operate under the State General Construction Permit (CGP). As mentioned earlier, site specific guidance is contained in the project's SWPPP. The SWPPP is required to be onsite for review and adherence. Information on SWPPPs is outlined below.

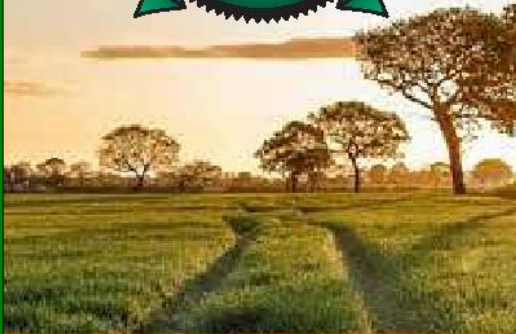
While the state of California enforces the federal Clean Water Act, it is free to add on regulations that are stricter. Since 2010, stormwater management requirements have been raised to a level not seen before in the United States. **Regulations have defined key roles for stormwater practitioners (QSPs) and SWPPP developers (QSDs). These individuals are required to have ongoing formal and informal training. Along with the property owner, they are responsible for protecting the environment. In California, all construction projects disturbing over one acre must utilize a QSP and a QSD. If your company works on CGP projects, document the environmental training of your staff. It will be needed for inclusion in the SWPPP and it will reflect positively on your firm.**

Finally, local ordinances may exist which are more strict than federal or state laws. Every landscape contractor should contact the local jurisdictions where they work to find out what local rules may apply. Check the stormwater webpage or call the stormwater manager.

#### [Here are some other important guidelines for preventing pollution:](#)

1. Locate and protect discharge points on the property (drain inlets, gutters flowing off site) and keep operations away from them or a keep buffer zone in case spills occur. Do not store soils, materials, etc. in the gutter where flows will carry off material. Avoid using leaf blowers to push debris into drain inlets.
2. Become knowledgeable in the proper selection and installation of products and materials for erosion and sediment control (ESC). Misunderstanding and misapplication is incredibly common and reflects poorly on the industry; the resulting pollutant discharges might be greater than having done nothing!
3. Don't damage the best management practices others have installed. Use them where appropriate. Cement washouts are not a place to throw solid waste, including concrete rubble.
4. Use appropriate irrigation designs to reduce the potential for erosion and pollution runoff.
5. Follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and disposal of chemicals and training of applicators and pest control advisors:
  1. Follow manufacturers' recommendations and label directions.
  2. Where practicable, use pesticides only if there is an actual pest control problem (not on a regular preventative schedule). When possible, use less-toxic chemicals that will get the job done in the minimum amount necessary.
  3. Never apply chemicals during or immediately before predicted rain or wind events, or anytime when wind exceeds 5 MPH.
  4. Do not mix or prepare chemicals for application near storm drains.
  5. Do not apply any chemicals directly to surface waters unless the application is approved and permitted by the state. Do not spray within 100 feet of open waters.
  6. Apply methods to minimize off-target application (e.g. spray drift), including consideration of alternative application techniques.
  7. Sweep pavement and sidewalks if chemicals are spilled. Do not hose spills down the gutter.
  8. Store all chemicals in closed, labeled containers and keep them off the ground.
  9. Properly dispose of used chemical containers.

More information on this and other important topics can be found on the State CLCA website: [www.clca.org](http://www.clca.org)



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### Dave Barry Quotes

I can win an argument on any topic, against any opponent. People know this, and steer clear of me at parties. Often, as a sign of their great respect, they don't even invite me.

You can only be young once. But you can always be immature.

Another possible source of guidance for teenagers is television, but television's message has always been that the need for truth, wisdom and world peace pales by comparison with the need for a toothpaste that offers whiter teeth and fresher breath.



The only really good place to buy lumber is at a store where the lumber has already been cut and attached together in the form of furniture, finished, and put inside boxes.

If a woman has to choose between catching a fly ball and saving an infant's life, she will choose to save the infant's life without even considering if there are men on base.

Although golf was originally restricted to wealthy, overweight Protestants, today it's open to anybody who owns hideous clothing.

Dogs feel very strongly that they should always go with you in the car, in case the need should arise for them to bark violently at nothing right in your ear.



What happens if a big asteroid hits Earth? Judging from realistic simulations involving a sledge hammer and a common laboratory frog, we can assume it will be pretty bad.

The most valuable function performed by the federal government is entertainment.

Sharks are as tough as those football fans who take their shirts off during games in Chicago in January, only more intelligent



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