Enter your project to be recognized in Ohio’s most prestigious landscape awards program.

DEADLINE TO ENTER
DECEMBER 13, 2019

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PURPOSE
This prestigious awards program was created to increase awareness of quality landscaping and how it improves our environment. This annual competition recognizes and applauds designers, installers, and property owners.

ELIGIBILITY
This program is open to all Regular member companies of the Ohio Landscape Association. (If you are not a member of the OLA, you may submit your application for membership with your project entry.) The project site must be located in Ohio or in a state that borders Ohio, and a major portion of the project must be the work of the entrant. Projects are eligible for five (5) years after completion. You may submit a project that was previously entered, unless that project has received an Honor or Judge’s Special Award.

ENTRY DEADLINE
All entries must be received before 5:00 pm on Friday, December 13, 2019 at the office of the Ohio Landscape Association, 9240 Broadview Road, Broadview Heights, Ohio 44147. Entries received after the deadline will be disqualified. The date allows spring, summer, and fall colors to assist your project!

JUDGING
A panel of landscape professionals, such as landscape designers, architects, nurserymen, and/or educators will judge the entries. The judges will score the entries on design, workmanship, and proper horticultural practices. To remain impartial, judges are unaware of the names of entrants at the time of judging.

AWARDS
There will be no more than one Honor Award for each category. There also may be up to two Merit Awards in each category for second place. Additional Merit Awards will be awarded in the case of tie scores. Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony that will take place in March 2020 for entrants, guests, and interested parties. You will receive up to 2 complimentary tickets to the dinner for each entry submitted. Complimentary tickets will be limited based on the total number of entries received (we hope to allow up to 20 per company). Additional tickets may be available for purchase. One plaque per winning entry will be issued. We will also provide certificates for the project foremen and designers.

HOW TO ENTER
1. Complete the entry form (please type) for each entry. Be sure to use a separate entry form for each entry and place each entry in a separate envelope. Please remember that there is a different entry form for maintenance projects. Entry forms must be printed out on paper and not submitted on the CD/DVD/USB. Digital photos must be included on a separate CD/DVD/USB for each project and included in the envelope. Include a check payable to the Ohio Landscape Association. Fee to enter ranges from $103 to $129 based on number of entries. You may write one check to cover all of your entry fees. If a project is disqualified for any reason, the entry fee will NOT be returned. The same project may be entered into more than one category with a separate entry form, separate set of photos CD/DVD/USB, separate description, and a separate entry fee. You may enter projects that have been submitted to other awards programs.

2. A maximum of ten (10) and a minimum of five (5) photos will be allowed for each entry, and MUST be submitted in digital format. Please number the photos in the order you want them viewed by the judges. No company names or logos can appear in the photos so judges can be impartial. If your company name or logo does appear in a photo, it will be removed or the photo will not be viewed by the judges.

3. DIGITAL SPECIFICATIONS – Digital entries must be submitted according to specifications. JPEG format is required and images should be no less than 300 dpi based on a 8” x 5” photo or larger. (NOTE: For consideration on future The Growing Concern covers, or other OLA promotional materials, please send the largest file size available.) Orientation of images can be either landscape (horizontal) or portrait (vertical). Please keep in mind that, should your project win, plaques require a horizontal photo to be used. A separate CD/DVD for each entry must be submitted. Do not submit your images in MS Word, PowerPoint, or any other type of presentation program. Do not compress files. Do not crop photos, adjust colors or brightness, or manipulate photos in any way or your entry will be subject to disqualification. Be sure your company name and/or logo does not appear in any of your photos - i.e. on a truck or uniform - it will be removed or the photo will not be viewed by the judges.

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4. OPTIONAL VIDEO - You may also submit a short video of your project. This is optional. It will not take the place of your requirement to submit photos. We would like to add videos to the awards presentation. The judges will also view your video. Please keep video under three minutes.

5. A simple plan for each entry, with numbers corresponding to the location the picture was taken, must be submitted. The plan is a reference point and can be the pre-construction plan. You do NOT have to redraw a plan that includes all the changes that may have taken place during construction. You may make a note or two on the plan about changes if you think it helps to clarify. The drawing itself is not judged. Judges are evaluating the actual finished landscape based on the photos and descriptions. The plan must indicate the scale and North orientation. No company or client name should appear on the plan, again to keep the judges impartial. If you do not submit a plan, your project may be disqualified and the entry fee will NOT be returned. Plans are not required for maintenance projects or for Best Use of Color. Plans will NOT be returned. Please include printed plan or make a notation that it is on the disk provided.

6. A plant list must be included with all entries into the installation categories. Plant list may be incorporated into the drawing/plan. The plant list is a reference for the judges. If you have a few more or a few less plants, you need not redo the list. Plant lists are not required for maintenance projects or Best Use of Color.

7. Each entry must be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope with your company name and the letter of the category entered marked on the outside. Please, DO NOT STAPLE PAPERS TOGETHER. One entry per envelope. Each entry must have its own CD/DVD/USB of images. Please include the category, your company name, and company location on the CD/DVD/USB. Example: Category A - ACME Landscapes - Anywhere, Ohio. CDs/DVDs/USBs will not be returned, but you will receive a copy of the judging form for each of your entries after April 30, 2020.

8. All entry material becomes the property of the Ohio Landscape Association and may be used for promotional purposes. Winning entries will be featured in the Spring/Summer 2020 issue of Landscape Ohio! Magazine - a supplement to Ohio Magazine and Cleveland Magazine. Your client’s name will NOT be printed in Landscape Ohio! Magazine, but be certain that they will not object.

WHY ENTER?

- PROMOTE YOUR WORK QUALITY - Tell your clients that you are an award winning contractor.
- BUILD CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS - Clients will know that ‘award winning’ means they’ve hired a professional.
- MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES - Winning awards reinforces employee confidence and boosts moral.
- IMPROVE TEAM PERFORMANCE - This is a great training experience for new members of your team.
- BUILD A PHOTO LIBRARY - Enables you to show potential clients your work.

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THANK YOU TO LAST YEAR’S GENEROUS SPONSORS!
Please Note: When selecting a category for your entry - you MUST use the RETAIL VALUE of your project.

A. Residential Maintenance  (Properties must be in your care for 1 year or more. Be certain to use the maintenance category specific entry form.)

B. Commercial Maintenance  (Commercial sites, condominium & multi-family housing, etc. Properties must be in your care for at least 1 year.)

Residential Landscape Installation Categories C through H are judged on all components of the landscape, with the primary focus on plant material. If your project mainly features a hardscape installation with minimal plant material, consider entering in on of the Garden Structures and Pavement Categories O through Q.

C. Residential Landscape Installation, Category I - Projects less than $25,000
D. Residential Landscape Installation, Category II - Projects $25,000 to $50,000
E. Residential Landscape Installation, Category III - Projects $50,000 to $100,000
F. Residential Landscape Installation, Category IV - Projects $100,000 to $150,000
G. Residential Landscape Installation, Category V - Projects over $150,000
H. Residential Landscape Installation, Category VI - All projects with swimming pools

I. Commercial Landscape Installation, Category I - Projects less than $75,000*
J. Commercial Landscape Installation, Category II - Projects over $75,000*
K. Water Features
L. Landscape Lighting
M. Specialty Gardens  (To include theme gardens such as rock, butterfly, Japanese, container, healing, and sustainable gardens.)
N. Show/Display Gardens  (Show Gardens, including portions of show gardens, display and education gardens may ONLY be entered into the Show Garden category. Value is based on RETAIL value - not the cost to install.)
O. Garden Structures & Pavements, Category I - Projects under $35,000
P. Garden Structures & Pavements, Category II - Projects $35,000 to $75,000
Q. Garden Structures & Pavements, Category III - Projects over $75,000
R. Best Use of Color  (To include perennials and seasonal color. A drawing is not required, but may be included to tell the story of the project.)

Judging Criteria

Maintenance Projects
• Overall Appeal - First and lasting impressions, detail, mower lines and color of turf where applicable.
• Plant Material - Proper pruning and trimming of plants for the site.
• Shrub Beds - Edging, weeding, attention to detail.
• Hard Surfaces - Edges, weeds in cracks or base of curbs, etc.
• Special or Unique Features - Difficulty of site, seasonal color.

Residential Landscape & Commercial Landscape Installation Projects, Specialty Gardens, Show Gardens, Best Use of Color
• Subjective Appeal - First and lasting impressions.
• Design - Aesthetic and functional use of plant material achieves design objectives as described by award entrant.
• Plantsmanship - Plant selection, relationship of plants, use of form, texture, and color.
• Workmanship - Choice of materials, installation quality, detailing, degree of difficulty.
• Creativity - Unique or outstanding features.

Water Features and Lighting, Garden Structures and Pavements
• Subjective Appeal - First and lasting impressions.
• Design - Aesthetic and functional use of hardscape elements achieves design objectives as described by award entrant.
• Workmanship - Choice of materials, installation quality, detailing, degree of difficulty.
• Creativity - Unique or outstanding features.

Please be certain to use the maintenance category specific entry form.
HELPFUL HINTS TO ENTER

Fight the Urge to Procrastinate
• Keep designs current and show the job as it was actually installed.
• Take pictures throughout the different seasons, especially if entering for seasonal color!
• Always carry a camera with you. It is easier than finding time to get back at a later date and missing the perfect opportunity.
• Take plenty of shots so that you can submit the very best.
• Take before and after shots from the same location.

Let the Picture Tell the Story
• Remember, a picture is worth a thousand words.
• If you framed a great view, created an outdoor room, or have a great focal point, allow the picture to show it.
• Use appropriate lighting - Judges can’t make out details of dark or bleached out pictures. Morning, late afternoon, or cloudy days are often better for your photo shoot.

Allow the Jobs to Mature
• Sometimes a season or two of growth on plants, or aging of fresh cut stone can make an average job look great. (Make sure that the project is maintained.)
• Projects that are up to 5 years old qualify to enter.

Help the Project Look "Lived In"
• You created an outdoor room. If the grill is in the garage, move it out to the patio and remove the cover. If the table umbrella is closed, open it.
• Also, an empty bench or table looks better with a pitcher of iced tea and a pair of drinking glasses on it, or seat cushions.

Tidy Up Before You Shoot
• Remove any debris or clutter such as litter, leaves, garbage cans, children’s toys or hoses.

Shoot High - Shoot Low
• Sometimes the angle of a shot can make a nice picture even better.
• Be creative - take aerial shots from a ladder or rooftop, but remember to put safety first!
• Shoot low to the ground or from inside a planting bed with the tops of a tree, shrub, or some flowers framing the picture.

Sell the Project
• Explain how you solved a unique problem, met some unusual challenge, or worked out a difficult client request.
• Be sure to note if you feel one part of the garden is of questionable taste, but was a client’s desire or own addition.
• If you enter a project in more than one category, always write a new description that relates to the category and describes details relevant to that category.

Make the Judges’ Job Easy
• Your photos and descriptions should represent the work you did on the property. Work done by others should not be the focal point of your entry photos and descriptions.
• Be very concise and to the point in the descriptions of your project. Do not exceed the word limits, but do tell your story and be sure to explain the project thoroughly.
• Saying only “view from the east, view from the west, etc.” does not help the judges understand your project.
• Make sure that designs are readable and that the photos are in their proper sequence.

Think BIG
• Even the smallest of jobs can be an award winner!
• Occasionally, it may be advantageous to enter a particular section of a larger project.
• Be confident! If you have never entered in the past, don’t be intimidated.