

The Importance of Landscape Maintenance on Commercial and Residential Real Estate Properties

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The upkeep of property landscapes is a direct reflection of their worth and the owner's integrity.

Shoddy looks- weeds, dead plants and broken sprinklers say to the client: "This fixer upper is going to cost a lot to improve." Money is always an issue and it's a definite turn-off to see a messy unmaintained landscape. It diminishes sales potential and gives the message that the owner doesn't care about the property. First appearances do matter!

The good looks of a property also reflect on the perceived values of the owner. When a property looks healthy and well maintained, it's a good presentation that says the owner cares about the property. If you want a good presentation you need someone who is responsible, reliable and knowledgeable enough to keep it looking good.

Curb appeal is a must for impressing good clients. Foreclosure properties owned by banks almost always have a top team of professionals to keep the property looking good. This includes fixing broken windows, detail painting, root work, fencing, and driveway clean up, and especially landscaping. Landscaping is the proverbial "frosting on the cake" and everyone always notices the frosting. First impressions are huge because you only get one first impression.

You have to spend money to make money; so keep that place looking fine -to keep your money on the rise. To keep your landscape up to par we recommend these things which will give your property the best look and also save you money:

- Proper watering with an E.T. timer run by satellites that watch the weather patterns and give proper precipitation- not too little and not too much. All extra watering is literally money going down the drain and it harms the plants!
- Organic mulches on plants, trees and grasses are essential for proper nutrients that encourage growth and disease resistance. Organic mulch makes the soil dry slower thus saving water. Mulch also keeps down weed growth.
- Organic fertilizers are good. Synthetic fertilizers are bad because they kill microbes in the soil which otherwise breakdown minerals and other nutrients in the soil. They also pollute with petroleum and salts. Fast release fertilizers cause leaf membranes to rupture making infection and disease happen.
- Many landscapes look terrible because they are over and under watering and fertilizing with synthetic fertilizers.
- Time your fertilizing well. Landscapes need fertilizing every spring and fall – twice a year.

- Maintenance is crucial. Proper tree, grass and shrub trimming are essential to having a good look. Grass needs to be mowed with a sharp blade to look right. Plants need to be trimmed to allow air circulation, which stops fungus from destroying your plants and trees. Shaping is important. Who wants to see a bare boned leafless plant that was allowed to grow too big and then got butchered?
- Trees must have their dead branches, tops and sides trimmed, so that the shape is pleasing and the tree structure is strong enough to handle storms and heavy winds. There should be no suckers and no weak long branches. Proper pruning and shaping are essential to keeping your trees healthy and beautiful.

If the property shows that you care, people will be impressed and that is what it takes to sell!!

Not all Landscape Contractors understand the importance of first impressions- so ask for references. It's important to find a landscaper with integrity. I have a University Degree in Fine Arts, thirty years of experience, and I am a Certified Advanced Green Gardener- I use those skills every day to ensure that my clients' properties have a first impression that says: "This property is a successful lifestyle."

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