



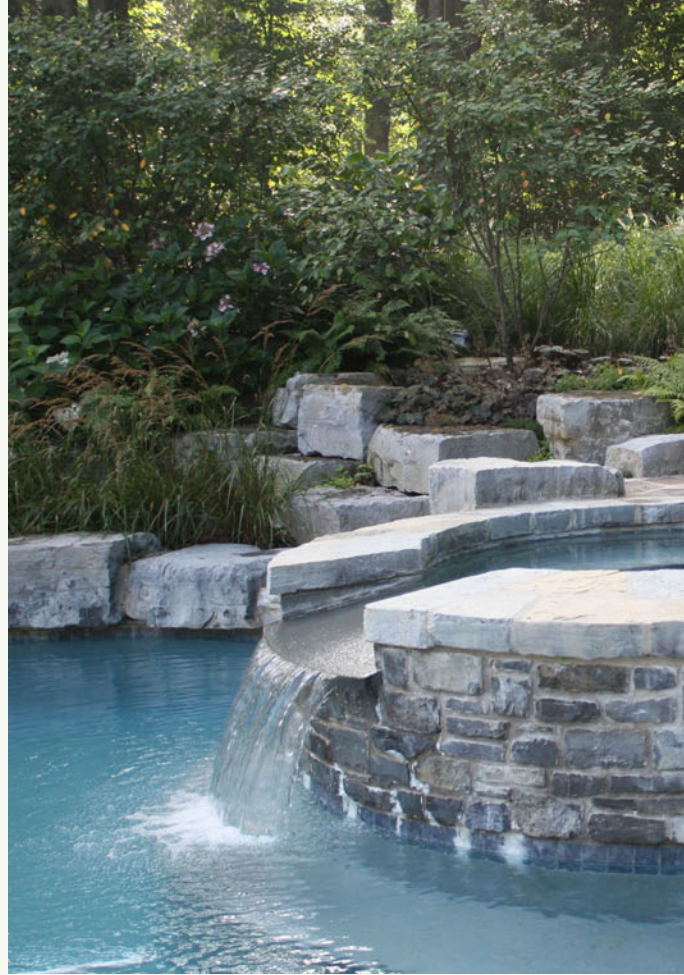
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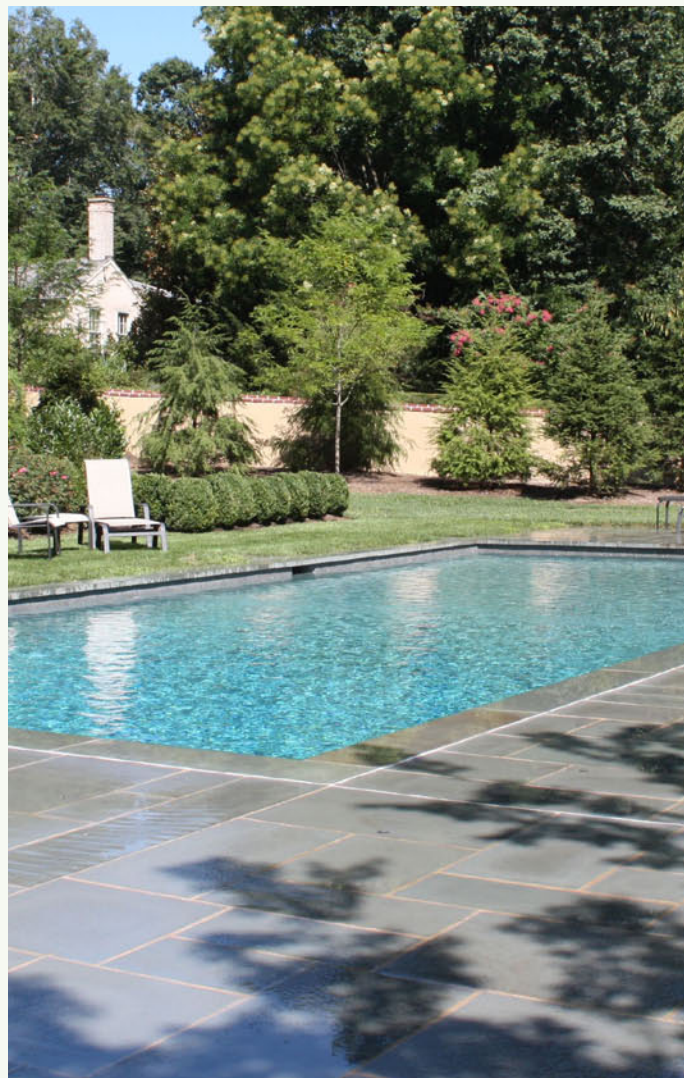


Land-Tech Enterprises, Inc.: That Was Then ...

By Pattie Krudowski

As an eleven year old cutting lawns in his Upper Dublin neighborhood, Mark Stein was just getting started. Even then, this go-getter knew what it took to build a business, establishing a loyal customer base through his high school years and developing industry contacts while working for his father's land clearing business in Bucks County.

It's no surprise that Mark is now the CEO of Land-Tech Enterprises, a thriving full-service landscape company serving Southeastern PA & NJ. Founded in 1989 with his wife Jackie, Land-Tech's focus was on erosion/soil control and landscape installation. Since then, the Land-Tech team has also developed an expertise in designing and building outdoor living spaces. What distinguishes Land-Tech Enterprises as best-in-class is their dedication for creating custom spaces as intricate or simple as their clients wish. Designs are not made





just to fit the space, but are crafted to fit the unique lifestyle of the families that will utilize the space. Land-Tech promotes the enjoyment of outdoor environments with tailored installations that are beautifully built.

Whether you know exactly what you want, or need professional guidance to see the possibilities, the experts at Land-Tech provide the top-notch service of a small community business, with the resources and expertise of an established company. “Our customers have the advantage of being assigned a project manager, who will see their project through, from beginning to end,” says Stein.

Their projects run a broad spectrum, from budget conscious requests to “sprucing up the landscaping” to planning, designing and building a lush horticultural escape. Whatever the request, customer satisfaction and aesthetic appeal are the goals. The fact that 95% of their clients are repeat customers speaks to their commitment to exceed expectations. The Land-Tech team can help you create your unique space including patios, swimming pools, cabanas, pool houses, outdoor kitchens, custom decks, perennial gardens, and much more.

The company employs certified horticulturists, skilled craftsmen and experienced stone masons who provide a coordinated, team approach for each project. The uniformed team members are part of the professional experience Land-Tech affords every client. After your project is complete, Land-Tech strives to continue the relationship with a wide range of services available to maintain your beautiful new space, year after year.

Land-Tech Enterprises has strategic locations in Bucks County, Lehigh Valley, West Chester and New Jersey to accommodate clients in the tri-state area. If you’re interested in enhancing your vacation home at the shore or in the Poconos, they can easily accommodate your vision. In Bucks County feel free to drop by their retail nursery for some quick landscape solutions or to see samples of their work through the design/build center.

Land-Tech has won numerous awards for their design/build work. Recently in 2011, the Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association, (PLNA), presented the company with Awards of Excellence in Residential Hardscape Installation & Maintenance. “The passion of our designers is displayed in each and every detail.”

To learn more about Land-Tech Enterprises, visit their website at www.landtechenterprises.com or contact the Residential Manager, (Bruno Morganheira), directly at 800-288-7372. (3084 B. Bristol Road, Warrington, PA 18976)



Planting Your Vegetable Garden

Preparing the Soil

Putting some extra effort into preparing your beds before planting will save you a lot of time and effort in the future. Dig the bed up to break up compacted soil (this will help with drainage) and removing rocks and weeds as you go. Try to pull out as much of the weed roots as possible so that they will not come back to haunt you later. This is also a good time to amend your soil.

Companion Plants in the Vegetable Garden

There are some plants that, when planted close together, will benefit each other. Likewise, there are certain combinations of plants that will inhibit the growth of one or both types of plants. Here are a few combinations to avoid:

- Potatoes – inhibit growth of tomatoes and squash
- Beans – inhibit growth of onions
- Broccoli – inhibits growth of tomatoes
- Carrots – inhibit growth of dill

This isn't to say that you can't grow these plants together in the same garden, just don't grow them right next to each other.

Watering

Vegetables need a bit of extra care when it comes to watering. Consistent watering will produce successful results. If you have a large garden, you may want to consider a soaker hose. This will ensure that your plants get an even watering without getting the leaves wet and all you have to do is remember to turn on the house.

Rotating Crops

Assuming that you plan to grow vegetables more than one year, it is important that you rotate your crops. Crop rotation prevents building diseases up in the soil and preserves micro-nutrients. Rotating is not very difficult, but does take a little advance planning as well as a basic knowledge of the vegetable families. Vegetables are broken down into basic family groups. These groups should be rotated together as they use soil in similar ways and share similar pests.

- Alliums

Include Onions, Garlic, Scallions, Shallots, and Leeks.

- Brassicas

Include Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Brussels Sprouts, and Kale.

- Crucifers

Include Turnips, Radishes, Rutabaga, and Collards.

- Cucurbits

Include Cucumbers, Squashes (from zucchini to pumpkin), and Melons.

- Legumes

Include Peas and Beans.

- Mescluns

Include Arugula, Swiss Chard, Chicory, Endive, Escarole, and Radicchio.

- Solanaceae

Include Tomatoes, Peppers, and Eggplant.

Perennial vegetables such as Asparagus, Rhubarb and Artichokes should not be rotated and therefore should be planted separately. The rest (most vegetables are hardy or semi-hardy annuals) should be rotated every year on a four year plan (so that the same family of vegetables is not planted in the same location within four years). This is easy to accommodate if you have planted four beds for your rotating plants and one bed for your non-rotating perennials. See where that advanced planning starts to come in handy?

Timing

How many times have you had a co-worker or friend arrive at your home or office with bags full of zucchini or cucumbers? If you plant all your vegetables at the same time, everything will come to maturity at the same time. The solution is to continually plant small amounts of short-season vegetables throughout the growing season. That way, you can enjoy your vegetables all summer long and not be inundated by them all at once.

Vegetable Container Gardens

Vegetables that thrive when planted in containers include: tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, carrots, chard, lettuce, beans, peas, and cucumbers.

Ornamental Vegetables

Who says that vegetable gardens are homely? There are many vegetables that, in addition to tasting good, are also very attractive. These include: sweet peas, French (green) beans, runner beans, endive, kale, red cabbage, and ruby chard.

Vegetable gardening can be great fun and it is truly rewarding to enjoy delicious food from your own garden. With these basics tips, you are well on your way. Enjoy!

Source: www.helpfulgardener.com/vegetable/2003/vegetable.html



Top Three Planning Tips for Successful Outdoor Parties

Entertaining outdoors can seem like a tall order, especially if you're trying to create an elegant yet ecologically-minded experience for your guests. But it doesn't have to be! Innovative products, many made from plastics, help make outdoor entertaining easier than ever. Below are three top tips for making sure your outdoor party is a memorable one!

The Right Grilling Tools

Outdoor grilling essentials include silicone plastic basting brushes for applying marinades and sauces, heat-resistant silicone grilling mitts to protect hands and arms from heat and flames, and shatter-resistant plastic containers with lids for sauces, marinades and dips. Lightweight plastic trays and platters come in all sorts of creative designs and make it easier transport food to and from the grill. And if you accidentally drop a plastic tray, you won't have to deal with glass or ceramic shards and splinters.

Sophisticated Serving Pieces & Table Settings

Planning a perfect outdoor party means making things as beautiful and easy as possible. Sophisticated plastic serving pieces and table settings are perfect for any type of outdoor party since they are lightweight and shatter-

resistant. For a more formal outdoor soiree, look for plastic pitchers, plates, flatware, serving pieces and even stemware with elegant designs.

Plastic drink dispensers with the look of crystal are a sophisticated way to serve refreshments at outdoor parties. Since guests can serve themselves (without fear of breaking a glass dispenser), there's no need for a hosted bar, which allows you to enjoy more time with your guests.

Sustainable Party Planning

Recycling is an essential part of entertaining – both indoors and outdoors. Make sure to place a labeled recycling bin next to the trash bin to remind guests to recycle at your next outdoor party. Depending on your local recycling programs, plastic bottles, bags, wraps, containers, cups, plates and cutlery can be recycled to live a second life as decking, t-shirts, handy wine carriers, cutting boards, carpeting and even outdoor furniture.

Happy entertaining!

Source: www.plasticmakeitpossible.com



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How to Select the Right Pool Builder

When you decide you are ready to build a pool for your family to enjoy, how do you know the right pool builder? Here are some simple questions to ask yourself as you go through this process.

1) How much experience does the company have in building pools, especially in my area? Understanding the history of a company is extremely important especially when choosing a pool company. There are plenty of one-truck companies out there willing to dig a hole in your yard and fill it with water, but can they stand behind the product? Building a pool is an investment, and one that should be backed by years of experience, excellent warranties and a company with the financial strength to ensure your pool will be built with the highest quality craftsmanship and materials. Anthony & Sylvan Pools has been building pools for nearly 70 years, and earned their reputation as being one of the nation's premier pool builders. Not only that, but this is where they started building pools, right here in the Delaware Valley and have been going strong ever since.

2) What are the design options and limitations? Some companies will show you drawings or photos and ask you to pick the one you like best. But, there are never any design limitations with Anthony & Sylvan Pools. If you can dream it they can build it. They have built thousands of pools in all shapes and sizes for families throughout the area. Their professional design con-

sultants will guide you through every step of the process to ensure that your pool has all of the features you desire and the pool is exactly the way you imagined.

3) What about the maintenance of a pool, how will I know what to do? Properly maintaining a pool has gotten easier and easier over the years with the addition of water purifying systems, automatic pool cleaners, and higher-efficiency filters and pumps. Anthony & Sylvan Pools has partnered with the leaders in the industry to provide pool owners with state-of-the-art options and equipment. Anthony & Sylvan Pools also walks you through the maintenance of your pool and provides you with a complete Pool Partner Guide and Disk that you can refer to at any time.

4) Do you trust the design consultant and the company? As with any major purchase in your life, you need to feel comfortable that you have made the right decision. With more than 370,000 swimming pools nationwide, Anthony & Sylvan Pools are confident that your pool building experience will be second-to-none. Their professionally trained design consultant, project manager and construction team will assist you and lead you through the entire process.

Contact your local Anthony & Sylvan Pools at (877) 826-0365 or www.anthonysylvan.com for more information and to get started on your dream pool.



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Landscaping: Where to Start? On Paper.

If you've decided to work on your own landscape plan, take precise measurements of the areas of your yard, and draw a sketch of your property. Highlight in red areas with underground cables (with the help of your local utility companies). Note which areas are sunny and which are shady. Pay special attention to problem areas: areas with poor drainage, erosion problems, etc. As you set this information down on paper, a clearer picture of what needs to be done emerges.

Based on your sketch (particularly the location of sunny or shady areas), research which plants will grow best in the various areas of your property.

The next step -- again, to be carried out on paper -- will be to include plants and hardscape features (patios, walkways, etc.) in your sketch.

Why bother landscaping a piece of real estate you've just bought?

Those who have just become homeowners for the first time might want a good reason why they should bother landscaping at all. The fact that landscaping can raise real estate values may be a good enough reason for many.

If enhanced enjoyment of your property through landscaping is insufficient incentive, consider this: landscaping enhancements can raise your real estate's

value by at least fifteen percent, according to many.

Should you hire a professional to work on your landscaping and, if so, how do you go about hiring a professional, such as a landscape designer?

Besides tree limbing, there are many other specialty tasks for which you may want to hire professionals. For instance, you may wish to hire an arborist to have a prize tree pruned properly. "Limbing" and "pruning" are entirely different operations. You may even want to have a landscape architect or landscape designer to re-do your entire landscape.

Some projects demand such highly specialized skills that you have little choice but to hire professionals, like installing a driveway for instance. Nonetheless, you can still make an informed decision before hiring someone by doing your homework.

The decision of do-it-yourself versus hiring landscape architects and other professionals largely depends on your budget and personal tastes. Even many people who can afford to hire a landscape architect prefer to do the work themselves, because they find it relaxing, challenging and satisfying.

Source: www.landscaping.about.com/cs/lazylandscaping/f/hire_architect.htm

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Remarkable Remodels

by Karen Appold

A remodeling project can be an overwhelming endeavor. So much so, that many homeowners put it off for years. The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) seeks to connect homeowners with professional, certified remodelers, so they can confidently turn their dreams into realities.

NARI encompasses all tradesmen affiliated with the remodeling industry, including carpenters, roofers, electricians, and so forth. NARI prides itself on certifying industry professionals by offering educational courses.

“By dealing with a certified NARI contractor, consumers are taking the unknown out of the picture,” says Michael Hydeck, CR, CKBR, president of National NARI and president and owner of Hydeck Design Build in Telford. Membership requires owning a business for one year and having proper state licensure.

NARI chapters get involved with community service projects that may take a weekend or even several months. Crews continue to head south to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. National NARI works closely with RenovatingHope, a charitable organization that provides sustainable home needs to those in the armed forces as well as veterans.

An ‘Entertaining’ Addition

Every year, NARI contractor members are invited to compete for prestigious Contractor of the Year (CotY) Awards, which demonstrate outstanding remodeling projects in various categories and price ranges.

Among the 2012 award winners were DelChester NARI chapter member CD Hall Builders of Berwyn for a “Residential Addition Between \$100,000-\$250,000” in Media. The homeowners desired an enlarged, updated kitchen and dining area with modern



Photo courtesy of Master's Design Build—Bob Graham, Jr. Photography
CD Hall Builders—Alex Hall with CD Hall Builders

flair as well as an expanded outdoor area for entertaining their growing extended family.

“We reconfigured the space for better traffic flow,” says Alex Hall of CD Hall Builders. In order to achieve an open floor plan, an oversized wood beam was installed to adequately support the second floor. “We integrated the beam ends into the cabinet design and accented the beam with architectural lighting. In essence, a problem became a focal point of architectural interest.”

The remodeled kitchen boasts a large island with a granite top and oversized sink with Hansgrohe faucet, perfect for preparing large meals. Extensive cherry custom cabinets wrap the kitchen area and offer much needed storage. Stainless steel appliances provide a modern look.

Contemporary lighting hangs above the island and recessed lights were installed elsewhere. A wet bar, perfect for parties, contains the same cabinetry as the rest of the kitchen. It includes a wine cooler, bar sink, and cabinets with glass doors.

French doors open to the adjoining outdoor area, which CD Hall revamped for enhanced entertaining during the warmer months. The deck was rebuilt using Azek Decking material, an outdoor custom bar was installed, and a ground level masonry patio was added for even more entertainment space.

In the finished project, plenty of natural light and warm hues provide a welcoming space where guests enjoy lingering for hours. Outdoors, multiple areas provide lots of additional room for seasonal activities.

A Sunroom for All Seasons

An entry by Master’s Design Build of Hatfield captured the “Best Addition Under \$100,000” for both the Bucks-Mont NARI chapter as well as the Northeast region. The clients were preparing for retirement and wanted to convert an existing three-season sunroom into a four-season conditioned sunroom. “They already spent a lot of time there and enjoyed pool views,” explains Brian J. Martin, CR, CKBR, president, Master’s Design Build, Hatfield. The couple desired an open feel as well as additional natural light in the adjacent family room. The house was due for a new roof, so that was replaced along with the addition’s new roof.

However, the project was almost cancelled when it was determined that the sunroom’s existing foundation was only 24 inches deep—12 inches shy of the required 36 inches. The homeowners were

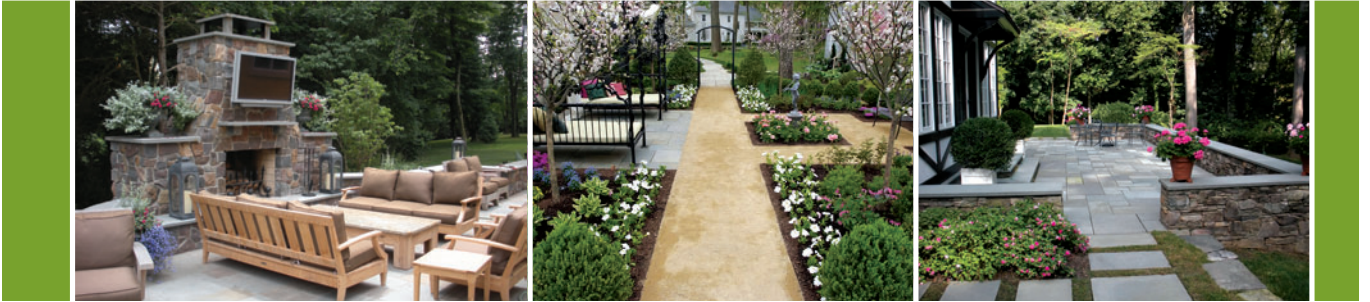
unwilling to increase their budget by \$10,000 to accommodate this requirement. Martin creatively suggested using “Shallow Frost Protected Foundation” technology not often used in the United States to overcome this challenge and minimize the cost. Hatfield Township’s code enforcement officer agreed to Martin’s proposal. “We were thrilled that the officer was willing to listen to an alternative way of doing something,” Martin says.

In order to match the sunroom’s exterior with the home existing steel siding, Hardie fiber cement siding that closely matches the wood grain of the existing siding was color matched by Sherwin Williams.

Several steps were taken to brighten the new sunroom as well as provide generous lighting into the adjacent family room. New windows extend 16 inches higher than the originals and the patio door was replaced with an eight-foot wide Jeld-Wen sliding door without grids. Recessed lighting in the cathedral ceiling and a soaring gable provide generous lighting and make the space appear even larger than its 225 square feet.

Finally, soothing hues on the walls, a tan ceramic tile floor and decorative rugs set the stage for vibrant furnishings to pop. The sunroom is both warm and relaxing, providing a space to enjoy every day of the year whether it’s sunny or not.

Karen Appold is a freelance writer based in Royersford, PA. Visit www.WriteNowServices.com.



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