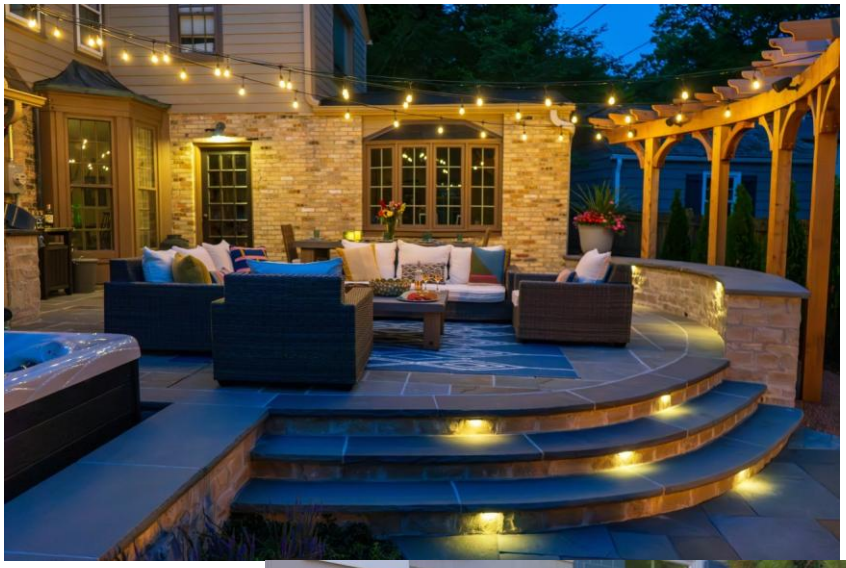
WISCONSIN LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

Excellence

in landscaping awards

2027





In partnership with MKE Lifestyle magazine, collaborating to bring excellence in landscaping to a new level.

MKE lifestyle

ELIGIBILITY

Participation in the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association (WLCA) Awards Program is open to all individuals or firms who are members in good standing.

A project may be submitted by the landscape architect or designer, the landscape installation contractor, the landscape maintenance contractor or a combination of the above. Landscape management projects entered must have been maintained for a period of **at least 24 months** prior to entry deadline. Work performed on projects entered must have been completed substantially **by private industry and be the work of a member of WLCA**. Any project that has previously won a WLCA award may not be re-entered in the same category.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- You may enter multiple projects. Entry forms, photos, and fees must all be submitted **SEPARATELY** for each category entered.
- The same project may be entered in two categories. Separate entry materials and fees are required. Different pictures must be submitted for each entry.
- All entries must be submitted with the knowledge and approval of the owner/manager of the property.
- All submitted materials, including photographs and descriptions, become the property of the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association (WLCA) , and may be reproduced by WLCA for any purpose.
- **PLEASE READ THROUGH THE ENTRY FORM VERY CAREFULLY.**

CATEGORIES

There are five categories in which to enter. Each project must be designated for one of the five categories with the appropriate subgroup indicated, i.e. 1-A, 3-B, etc…

1. Residential Landscape Design & Construction

Category will include only landscape projects for single family or duplex residences, typically owner-occupied. Apartment projects and similar multi-family buildings must be entered in the Commercial Category.

A. Less than $35,000 **B.** $35,000 to $75,000 **C.** $75,000 to $200,000 **D.** More than $200,000

2. Commercial Landscape Design & Construction

Category will include commercial sites or institutional projects, as well as multi-family residential projects.

A. Less than $35,000 **B.** $35,000 to $75,000 **C.** $75,000 to $200,000 **D.** More than $200,000

3. Landscape Management

Category will include maintenance of residential, commercial and multi-family landscape projects.

A, Residential - Single Family **B.** Commercial - Businesses **C.** Multi-Family - Condo Projects, etc. **D.** Colorscaping - Annual/Perennial Care, etc.

4. Special Projects

Category will include any non-conforming projects of special merit or unusual character which are not more appropriately included in one of the above categories. The following are possible examples: Trade Show/Promotional Displays, Night Lighting, Mature/ Historic Landscapes (20 years plus), Interiorscapes, Golf Course Construction/Restoration, Large Tree Moving, etc.

A. Water Feature **B.** Lighting **C.** Irrigation **D.** Trade Show Displays **E.** Hardscapes **F.** Historic Site **G**. Landscape Structures **H.** Seasonal Color **I.** Interiorscapes

5. Sustainability

Category will include a sustainability element of an existing project (i.e. shoreline restoration, storm water management, prairie restoration or development, or erosion control.)

The dollar value of the projects submitted must include ALL direct costs of labor, material, equipment, subcontractors, etc., plus overhead and profit figured in completing the project.

ENTRY FORMAT

Each entry must include the following:

- A fully completed entry form.
- A maximum of six (6) "Before Photos" Saved as JPEG or PNG files only, labeled as: 01 Before Project Name,02 Before Project Name, etc…
- A minimum of ten (10) and a maximum of fifteen (15) "after" digital images. Saved as JPEG or PNG files only, numbered sequentially in the order you wish them to be viewed by judges. Images must be labeled as follows:
  01 Project Name, 02 Project Name, etc…

The following requirements apply to all photos:

√ Do **NOT** list your company name in any manner.
√ No images may contain entrant company logos in any manner. This includes company logos on trucks, equipment and clothing.
√ At least three photos of the completed project must be submitted in the horizontal (landscape) format and at least one must be in the vertical (portrait) format.

- A brief descriptive key to digital images in same order as digital images. Text must be no more than 30 words per photo and must be double spaced. Descriptive photo key should be saved as the project name, as a Word document with no company logos.
- A descriptive text which explains the background for the project and takes into account potential problems and solutions, cost considerations and budget, and any constraints. Text **MUST** list the client's criteria for the project and any budget considerations. Descriptive text must be saved as the project name, as a Word document and meet the following submission requirements:

  √ Text must be 12 point font
  √ Text must be no more than 400 words
  √ Page margins must be no less than ½ inch.
  √ No company logos.
- A 150 word summary of your project. This summary will be used as the narrative during the awards program when the award winning projects are presented at the banquet.
- Two (2) landscape plans or plan sets with black and white graphics (Grayscale only. No color graphics) containing no company logos submitted as PDF files saved as the project name. One plan file should be saved as full plan size (i.e. 24 x 36" or greater) and the other plan file should be saves as 11 x 17" plan size. Do **NOT** submit CAD or other drafting program files.
- An optional 60—90 second supplemental video of the project may also be included with the entry.

NOTE: Incomplete entries or nonconforming entries will not be considered for awards. Make sure narratives and digital images correspond with one another, and are clearly labeled! If your entry is not accepted, your payment will be returned to you.

ENTRY FEES & DEADLINES

Early Entry

- $175 entry fee for each project submitted.
- The completed entry must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM, Friday, November 27, 2026.

First Time Entrants

- $125 entry fee for each project submitted by a first time entrant or for companies that have not entered in the past five years.

Late Entry

- $200 entry fee for each project submitted after 5:00 PM, Friday, November 27, 2026 until 5:00 PM, Friday, December 18, 2026.
- **Entries received after December 18, 2026 will not be included in the program.**

NOTE: All fees must be paid in full upon entry. Any entry received without full payment will not be included in the program.

JUDGING

A panel of experts judges the entries and determines award recipients. The panel consists of industry experts such as Landscape Architects, Landscape Design/Build Contractors, Landscape Management Contractors, Faculty Instructors or Professors and Lawn Care Professionals.

Each of the entry categories is evaluated independently. The judging criteria for each category is as follows:

Landscape Design & Construction

- Overall excellence of design, selection and appropriateness of materials
- Degree of difficulty
- Installation techniques
- Craftsmanship
- Execution of construction details
- Maintenance considerations
- Finished appearance of the project as viewed through the use of images and photographs.

Landscape Management

- Overall appearance of project
- Cleanliness of site
- Condition of plant material and planting beds
- Degree of difficulty and general condition of lawn areas and hard surfaces

Sustainability

- Purpose
- Function
- Perceived ecological value
- Appearance

The text submitted with each entry should include:

- Purpose of project; client objective/project restrictions
- Design, construction or management objectives
- Role of the landscape contractor, designer and/or architect
- Solutions to problems
- OPTIONAL— may include major subcontractors work performed, as well as suppliers of miscellaneous materials and include at the end of the text.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

- Award winners will be notified in February and the awards themselves will be presented at a special awards evening to be held in March.
- Winners are encouraged to invite Landscape Architects, Landscape Designers, clients, foreman, crew and family as they see fit.
- Award winning projects will be placed on digital display at various events throughout the year!
- Award winning projects will be featured on association websites.
- Plaque is presented to all winners at the awards event. Additional plaques can be purchased.

PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Announcement and presentation of award at Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Awards Event in March
- Press Release announcing winners sent to trade and regional news media
- Ability to announce on your website, send your own press releases, etc.
- Self-promotion as an award winning landscape contractor
- Recognition on WLCA websites

CHECKLIST

To be sure that your entry qualifies and is accepted for judging, be sure you have included the following items in your electronic entry submission

- Completed Entry & Release Form - be sure to get the release signatures! (Form available on website.)
- Detailed project checklist. (Form available on website.)
- "Before photos" - six maximum and must conform to all rules for photos and labeling. Images must be in jpeg or png format.
- Ten (10) to fifteen (15) "after" images of project numbered and labeled by project name and keyed to descriptive photo text document. Images must be in jpeg or png format.
- Listing of images and photo text narratives (in the order you wish to have them judged) saved as a Word document.
- Descriptive text overview saved as a Word document - 12 point font, limited to 400 words or less.
- A 150 word project summary in a Word document. This summary will be used as the narrative during the awards program when the award winning projects are presented at the banquet.
- One set of plans in their original size (i.e. 24"x36", etc…), black and white drawings saved as a PDF document. Required for categories 1 and 2; optional for categories 3, 4, and 5.
- One set of plans in reduced 11"x17" size—black and white drawings saved as a PDF document.

Be sure to complete the Payment Form (Form available on website.) and mail with entry fee payment.

Be sure to review the detailed requirements for each part of the submission on the entry form. You MUST follow the requirements for labeling, word count, font size, etc. Please be sure your submission meets the specified requirements.

TIPS FOR A STRONG ENTRY

- **PLEASE** read this brochure carefully and submit a complete entry.
- All projects are reviewed only through photos and the accompanying script, so be sure to submit the best photos and clear, concise descriptions.

PHOTOS

- Pay careful attention to photo selection. Don't show anything that could defeat the credibility of your project as an award winner. i.e. brown leaves, uneven pruning, etc…
- Include overhead shots taken from a deck, upstairs window, etc…
- Close-up shots of construction details help convey the challenges of the construction process.
- For installation projects show "before", "during" and "after" shots taken from the same vantage point and explain in your descriptions the special challenges of the construction process.
- Wet concrete enhances photos.
- Include photos that portray compatibility of materials and show textural qualities.

DESCRIPTIONS

- Keep descriptions simple and concise.
- Emphasize the most unique elements of the project.
- Avoid overusing adjectives and adverbs to describe the photo.
- Identify any special plants.

ENTRY PROCESS

The process is as follows:

1. Visit the WLCA State or WLCA Metro Milwaukee website Awards Program page at:
   https://www.wisconsinlandscape.org/awards
   https://www.findalandscaper.org/awards-program

2. You will find the list of documents you need to complete for each entry. Each entry should include one copy of each of the following:
   - Entry & Release Form
   - Payment Form
   - Detailed Project Checklist (be sure to complete the one that applies to your entry)

   These forms are Word documents and are ready for you to complete in Word.

3. In addition to these entry form and detailed project checklist, you must submit the following in Word format:
   - A brief descriptive key to digital images.
   - A descriptive text of the project. (12 point font - no more than 400 words.)
   - A 150 word project summary.

   Be sure to read through the entry format page carefully to ensure that you are submitting the above information in the required format.

4. The rest of the required components are items that you provide:
   - Before photos (maximum of 6)
   - Project (after) photos (minimum of 10 and maximum of 15)
   - Landscape plan - 11 x 17" , grayscale only, no company logos - PDF format only.
   - Landscape plan - full size - 16 x 24" or greater, grayscale only, no company logos - PDF format.

5. Submit your entry to WLCA using one of the following options:
   A. Email your entry to WLCA Awards at: wlcaawards@gmail.com - each entry must be in a separate email.
      √ The email subject line should include the project name.
      √ The email should include the following attachments:
      1. Entry & Release Form
      2. Detailed Project Checklist
      3. Brief Descriptive Key to Digital Images
      4. Descriptive Text of Project
      5. Before Photos
      6. Project Photos

      √ The maximize size of the email is 25 MB. (You may need to re-size your image files if they are large.)
      √ Remove all properties and personal information from photos.

   B. Place all your entry materials in a **Drop Box** and email a link to the Drop Box to: wlcaawards@gmail.com. **No other shared file services will be accepted.**

6. Complete the Payment Form and mail with entry fee, made payable to Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association to:

   WLCA ● Attn: Awards ● 21620 Belgren Road ● Waukesha WI 53186