

Oregon Landscape

1st Quarter, 2017



Oregon's Landscape Professionals



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President's Message

Matt Triplett, LIC, CLIA, OLCP, Willamette Landscape Services, Inc.



My how time flies. We say goodbye to 2016 which saw the loss of so many important dignitaries and beloved celebrities. We navigated the swings of geopolitical discourse from amazing highs to amazing lows. And we saw our share of news that ran the spectrum from great to horrific. And now here we are – 2017.

Without delving into the obvious rhetoric of the political tumult already begun, we really are at a place where we must pay attention. I recently heard Oregon referred to as an island in the context of being a predominantly left-wing-governed state in what has become a predominantly right-wing-governed country. That means for business we are undoubtedly in for an interesting ride.

Specifically, though, we owe it to ourselves to pay attention to legislative efforts that affect us directly. We are fortunate to have

a couple of great lobbyists who are hard at work helping us keep our eye on the ball. Not only do they come to our board meetings to educate us directly, but they provide bill tracking and regular updates through the website and newsletter.

Please spend some time viewing the bill tracker on the website and becoming informed on the issues we are facing. Taking a look at HB2206 and SB474 which directly threaten our landscaping laws is a great place to begin and lend your voice to the conversation! If you're able and interested please consider joining the OLCA legislative committee.

High points for OLCA in 2016 were once again the amazing chapter meetings, successful certification exam, and the most spectacular Northwest Landscape Expo in years!

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Sponsor Acknowledgement

OLCA thanks our supporters for their generosity and urges members to demonstrate their appreciation by returning our sponsors' support.

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Great turnout, fruitful networking, and spectacular education was had by those who were engaged. If you haven't been a part of the movement, now is a great time to get involved. Never before have OLCA's functions had so much to offer and every committee is looking for fresh input. If you've ever thought an event could be improved and that you have good ideas, you are welcome to join in the feeling of accomplishment that working with fellow members on successful programs provides.

Adding further value to OLCA events is the **SAFE ZONE** initiative. The board heard tell of the poaching of employees at work and events - stories of employees being contacted while on the clock with other companies, being handed business cards at gas stations and on job sites, and even raiding an ex-client's in house staff! The most egregious stories were solicitations at OLCA events and from fellow OLCA members. The board has responded strongly against these occurrences at OLCA events and questions the ethics of it happening at large. Please review elsewhere in this newsletter the basis for the **OLCA SAFE ZONE** policy, the **OLCA Code of Ethics**, and help police unsavory hiring practices within our membership.

Before wrapping up, I just want to give a special shout out to Jim Larson. He's been doing amazing things on behalf of OLCA and if you see him, let him know we're all grateful for his efforts.

Get out to a chapter meeting, get legislatively involved, get plugged in! It's a great time to be part of OLCA.

OLCA Code of Ethics

As proud members of the Oregon Landscape Contractor's Association, we conscientiously commit to the following codes of professional conduct for the following reasons:

Core Commitments

Commitment to Consumers

- Conduct business in a professional manner.
- Provide information based upon honest, scientific, accurate and factual knowledge.
- Practice honesty in advertising, proposals, and representation of capabilities.

Commitment to our Environment

- Protect and preserve our most valuable resource, the environment.
- Operate in an environmentally safe manner.

Commitment to the Law

- Adhere to all contractual obligations in essence and spirit.
- Abide by all laws and regulations affecting the green industry and support the enforcement of these laws.



It's an IMPORTANT time! Here's to a very healthy, successful, and prosperous 2017 - no matter what it may throw our way. And remember:

Commitment to Fellow Professionals

- Deal fairly with subcontractors and suppliers.
- Avoid making unfounded statements, which, in any way, might injure the professional reputation of another.
- Refrain from recruiting other company's employees during any OLCA sponsored event.

Commitment to the Association

- Adhere to the by-laws of the Association.
- Strive to participate in continuing education.
- Strive to attain certification.

Commitment to Employees

- Develop, promote and reinforce good safety practices throughout all phase of operation.
- Encourage equal opportunities for all people in education and employment without regard to race, color, creed or national origin.
- Respect colleagues and the endeavors of colleagues.
- Offer employees a fair and safe working environment, educational possibilities and career opportunities.
- Utilize sound professional management practices and encourage employees to respond to their peers in a respectful manner.

"One cool judgment is worth a thousand hasty counsels. The thing to do is to supply light and not heat." —Woodrow Wilson

OLCA Portland Chapter Landscape Awards Program 2017: Call for Entries

Time to take those project photos - before and after - Entry deadline July 7, 2017

By Jim Larson, Landscape Awards Committee Chair and Bob Kirtley

Most contractors are very proud of their work. As well you should be!! Landscape contractors do so much more good than harm in so many ways for our environment as well as for our client's spirits. Where would you rather work; a dingy old tin building, or on a beautifully landscaped campus? When you finish your work day and want to spend time with your family, do

you want to pack everyone up and go to the local park, or would you rather enjoy your own backyard and barbeque with family and friends? And when you list your home for sale, whose property sells faster and for more money? The professionally landscaped one! This is what we offer as an industry; **beautification, improved environments, tranquility, and value.**

The crews who work for you here in the Pacific Northwest work in some harsh conditions, and do a tremendous job. You should be proud of them and show your appreciation as well. Get them involved. Bring the supervisor to the awards presentation; congratulate them in front of the others at your office the day after the awards. This

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can sometimes create competition between crews..... always a good thing.

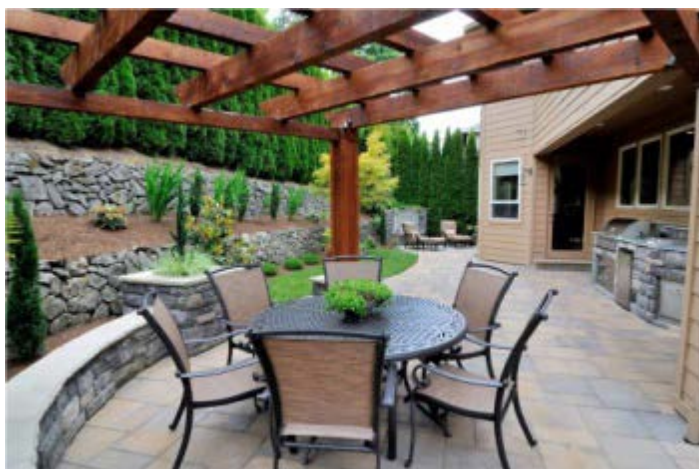
The OLCA Portland Regional Chapter's Landscape Awards program is exactly what you need. Enter the best projects you have and see how you stack up with the other members of the chapter. It's a friendly competition, a true "hats off" to your crews, and a great marketing tool!! Should you be a winner, proudly display your award trophy in your office and maybe make a copy for your customer. They get as excited as you do (and it's a great way to promote your business to their family and friends).

For this program to succeed, we need to promote the idea to all landscape contractors and encourage them to join OLCA for this event. Jobs are reviewed on site by peers and critiques are written for your future projects. Everyone's skills improve through competition.

Our publicity committee will help get the word out to the buying public, and inform them of the advantages of hiring OLCA members. Those who participate in the awards program generally show a higher level of professionalism than the competition. Their customer service is usually far superior to other contractors. It's these qualities that make a valuable impression on the buying public. The judges will also inquire as to the relationship between the customer and the contractor when possible; it's a big part of being a professional!

We would love to have all members submit at least one project this year. The more projects submitted, the better opportunities for a wider appeal to the public. Check out the website for the categories for this year and if you have a project that doesn't fit into one, let us know what you think the category should be. We'll figure out a way to make that happen.

We will have more information on parameters of the awards in coming months. Please stay tuned. Now is the time to review your projects with your managers, and look at the projects to see what might need to be "polished up" prior to judging time. Remember, you as an owner need to judge your projects too. As spring comes along (and we hope it will), **remember to take those photos of your best projects.** Always show them in full bloom if you can.



Getting Mobile Optimized

Written By Vic Carlson, RiverCityReach

Various reports share that more than two-thirds of U.S. adults own a smartphone, and for many of those that device is a main access point to the Internet. Nearly ten percent of those smartphone users rely heavily on that device for their online access. And as one can imagine those numbers are increasing daily and are expected to continue to do so over the foreseeable future.

Due to our smartphone-dependent society mobile web traffic is on the increase – so consider what people find when they open your site on their mobile device. And, consider how your mobile site stacks up to those of your competition.

Is your mobile site merely a pint-sized copy of your main or desktop website, with its now tiny text and tiny buttons

which make it next to impossible to read the content or access pages? Does navigating anywhere on your mobile site require many swipes and much enlarging to make it usable?

Or, is it mobile-optimized – sized to fit the screen it is viewed on, with pertinent content sized to be easily read, with buttons sized and strategically placed ready to be easily clicked, tapped or swiped?

Not All Mobile is Viewed or Created Equally

All mobile is not equal when considering how a website appears on a mobile device (smartphones, tablets, etc.). There are options to get a website mobile-optimized. The two major choices are: a Responsive-design website or a Mobile-dedicated site.

A **Responsive-design** is a website design in which the screen display is adjusted or rearranged according to the screen size it is viewed on, whether large or small. Thus allowing for the same content, functionality, and features to be effective for mobile viewing – letting a mobile site function like a desktop-viewed site.

The Responsive site approach has these advantages and disadvantages:

- Only one website for a variety of devices
- Maintaining and monitoring only a single, shared site
- One website for easier content management – no duplicate content on different site versions
- Requires a site porting (move) to a Responsive-design theme/template,

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Portland Regional Chapter

Portland Regional Chapter
2017 Landscape Awards
Start Planning Now

Be Recognized for your Outstanding Work

Open to all OLCA members from Ridgefield, Washington to Salem, Oregon and the north Oregon Coast are invited to enter

Sponsored by the
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Contractors Association
Portland Regional Chapter

Entry Deadline July 7th, 2017 at 4pm

Winners will be announced at the Landscape Expo Kick-Off
on December 12th, 2017 in Portland, Oregon

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or a new site can be built

- Same content may be displayed in a three-column format on a desktop, two-column format on a tablet, and one-column format on a smart-phone
- Possible reduction of content for viewing on a smaller screen, hide or remove some buttons/content that might not be needed for mobile viewing
- Loading a Responsive page can take longer than loading a Mobile-dedicated page

Mobile-dedicated sites on the other hand are unique, custom-built websites that are complimentary to a main or desktop website – but the sites can share much. You basically

would be including a unique mobile site to your online presence. The Mobile-dedicated site approach has these advantages and disadvantages:

- No need to rebuild a main or desktop site when adding a mobile-dedicated one
- A mobile website needs to be designed, programmed, and built
- Two websites to maintain and monitor
- Reviewing and updating of content on two sites making sure that it is current on both
- They often exclude content and functions that may be relevant at least to some users occasionally

For most users there is no distinction

between these two mobile site options. For the most part people do not recognize Responsive sites as being different than Mobile-dedicated ones. With either method know that people using a mobile phone typically aren't looking for as much information as on a main site. Therefore, keep content simple and very easy to browse on a small screen.

In today's sales environment – speed and ease of use matter! With so many choices on the Internet one can't afford to lose even one potential customer due to a cumbersome mobile website experience. A mobile-optimized site (Responsive or Mobile-dedicated) leads to an efficient, enjoyable experience for those that visit your site.

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Portland Regional Chapter Review

By Jim Larson, OLCA Portland Regional Director

In previous newsletter issues, I have written about where our future employees are going to come from. This was a great opportunity to connect with those employees.

For those that missed the Portland Regional Chapter February meeting, you missed one of the best chapter meetings in awhile. I say that because we had a great mix of contractors, some suppliers, and a great group of students from Portland and Clackamas Community Colleges coming together to network.

The meeting started off with Danny Sullivan from LaPorte, OLCA's

endorsed Health Insurance provider giving an update on the Affordable Care Act and an overview of a new program called Healthiest You. For more information you can contact Danny Sullivan at dsullivan@laporte-insurance.com.

The rest of the meeting was on developing Internships with local landscape/horticulture programs at PCC and CCC. David Sandrock with PCC and April Chastain with CCC outlined their work experience programs for their different degree programs and how landscape businesses can navigate through the application process and posting of

positions available at the colleges. Corey Petersen with Pacific Landscape Management presented a discussion on being a past intern while attending Oregon State University and his experiences being an intern and working summers mowing lawns as well as other responsibilities..

Cooperative Education at PCC Landscape Technology

All degree seeking LAT students are required to complete 6 credits (30 hours of work per credit) of Co-op Education (internship) as part of their degree. LAT students

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pursuing the Landscape Technology AAS Degree or the Environmental Landscape Technology AAS Degree traditionally pair with industry partners to fulfill the coop education requirement while students pursuing the Landscape Design AAS Degree fulfill the requirements by completing residential designs for two real-world clients guided by a faculty mentor. To learn more, please go to <http://www.pcc.edu/resources/careers/internships/>. If you are interested in providing a Co-op Education experience for a current student, please contact Tamara Williams at twilliam@pcc.edu or 971-722-7243.

Links:

PCC Internships -

<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/careers/internships/>

Getting started -

<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/careers/internships/start.html>

PCC Cooperative Education Handbook - <http://www.pcc.edu/resources/careers/internships/documents/coop-student-handbook.pdf>

Faculty Handbook -

<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/careers/internships/documents/coop-handbook.pdf>

Cooperative Work Experience (CWE) at Clackamas Community College

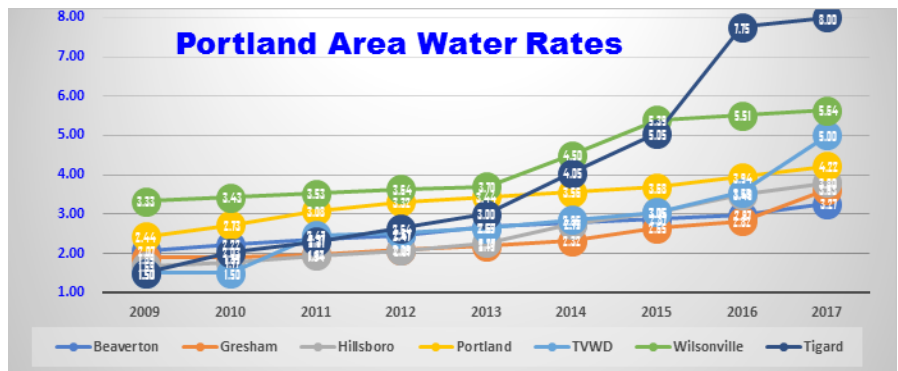
Clackamas Community College has CWE's available in horticulture and in landscape maintenance.

Why should a student participate in CWE?

- Explore jobs and careers related to your college studies

Water Rates Are Rising

By Bob Grover, CLP, CLT, OLCA Legislative Chair



Did you know that the average price for water in the Portland Metro area has doubled in the past 6 years? As you can see from the chart above, all rates have risen, some more than other, and the rates vary widely from city to city. Wilsonville and Tigard have led the curve to fund new water source projects. To fund a new pipeline from Wilsonville to Washington County, Hillsboro raised rates 9% this year and will so for the next 10 years over doubling the current rate during that time: <http://www.oregonlive.com/hillsborowater>. Tualatin Valley Water District raised

rates 14.5% this year and will follow Hillsboro to help fund their part of the pipeline costs: <https://www.tvwd.org/news>

Water is getting to be a precious, and expensive resource. You need to be aware of and prepare for annual increases greater than the overall inflation as that has been the pattern for the past 7 years and will likely continue. Proposing water conservation projects and water efficient landscaping will become more common as the cost of water will get everyone's attention in the near future if it hasn't already.

- Improve your professional confidence and job skills
- Gain hands-on job experience to put on your resume
- Earn academic credit toward graduation
- Have an opportunity to work with equipment not available on campus
- Make valuable employer contacts
- Increase chances for a full-time job after graduation

April with CCC also announced a new degree program in Arboriculture starting this spring term. To get more information about the Arboriculture AAS program at CCC, contact Loretta Mills at 503-594-3292 or lorettam@clackamas.edu.

Please visit the Portland Regional chapter web page on OLCA's website for all upcoming meetings and events in 2017, <http://www.oregonlandscape.org/portland-regional-chapter>.

Are Smart Controllers Dumb, or Am I Just Stupid

By Dan Lockwood, OLCA ERC Chair

Throughout my career in landscaping I have installed, removed and replaced many irrigation controllers, installed countless heads and adjusted all sorts of nozzles. Irrigation technology has changed tremendously since analog controllers, impact sprinklers, and galvanized pipe, and most of it has been a huge improvement. But, in my opinion, smart controllers still have a ways to go.

I would say that I have installed and tried a wide variety of smart controllers over the past 10 years. Some use phone lines to connect to local weather stations, some have their own weather stations, others used historical weather data and 'algorithms' (whatever the hell those are), and my personal favorites use a small controller that you attached to your original controller. They all are based on a very respectable idea that you can use your local weather data, soil type, exposure, sprinkler type, slope, your neighbors age, plant type, yadda yadda yadda, to come up with an ET (evapotranspiration) rate for your property, which will help determine how much you water. This is a great idea on paper, but in my experience (mainly based on residential properties), it just doesn't work. Based on my unscientific tests, I conclude that smart controllers are actually dumb for the following reasons:

- Too confusing. Anything that comes with a huge manual, or no manual scares me. If I can't walk the customer through the programming process without sounding like a scientist referencing algorithms, or tripping over my own tongue, then it is too confusing for the end user.
- Watering Schedules. People like routine (especially retired people). They like getting the mail, drinking their morning coffee, watching the Today show, and knowing their sprinklers came on that morning. These controllers love to cycle/soak to fill up that depleted water table. I love getting calls when the sprinklers don't run for days, then one day they water five times. Honestly, it just gets tiring trying to explain the reasoning behind it.
- Water Savings. I have torn out many smart controllers because the customer's water bill has risen and their yard looks like crap. Personally, I would challenge a smart controller up against a well-designed system with a standard controller, a good program, and a rainsensor any-day.
- Monthly Access Fees. Seriously, get rid of these.

Smart controllers may have their place on large commercial sites or agricultural fields where the areas are larger, the plant material is less complex, and the small microclimates of a residential

property are just not there. I am sure that one day smart controllers will have a place in the residential irrigation market, but for now, this irrigation contractor is sticking with the basics.

Welcome New Members

REGULAR MEMBERS

Lautenbach's Landscaping
Neighbor's Lawn Care LLC

Central Oregon Chapter Update

By Angie Snell, North of South Landscapes, Inc.

Our local meetings provide opportunities for Green Industry professionals to network, learn and share ideas. OLCA chapter meetings also provide updates and insights on events that affect our industry statewide. Landscape contractors, irrigation technicians, maintenance specialists, designers and vendors are encouraged to attend.

The Central Oregon chapter meetings are typically the second Tuesday of each month. A complete schedule with meeting details is available at www.oregonlandscape.org



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Legislative Update

By Bob Grover, CLP, CLT, OLCA Legislative Chair

Wow! What a wild political season it has been. With all of the protests and rhetoric on the national level, and the budget crisis in our state legislature is working through, it's important that you are also made aware of legislation that could impact your landscape license.

There are currently two proposed bills that would significantly change Oregon landscape licensure.

These two bills are SB474 and HB2206.

- **SB474** Eliminates continuing education requirements for landscape construction professionals.
- **HB2206** Eliminates education, experience and examination require-

ments for issuance or renewal of landscape contracting business license or landscape construction professional license.

OLCA has a legislative committee and works with a contract lobbyist to monitor bills and issues that would affect our members. In 2014 when these concerns came up, the legislature created a work group including a diverse group of representatives connected with the landscape industry. OLCA was represented on a legislative work group and it looked in all aspects of landscape licensing requirements. From this work group, a bill was created and eventually passed by

the legislature in 2015. We strongly feel that the changes made were appropriate and resolved most of the issues that the typical contractor had complained about. They included the following:

There are some "landscapers" in Oregon that essentially do not want any form of licensing to control their activities.

OLCA has always been supportive of landscape licensing to help ensure that we as an industry provide a basic level of quality and service while protecting consumer interests. We stay in contact with the LCB and work well together to ensure that these objectives are at the forefront of the LCB's focus on activities. We also believe that significantly changing or lessening the requirements for licensing and renewal will degrade reasonable standards of our services and consumer protection. For that reason, we oppose these proposed bills and encourage you to as well. If these bills move forward, we will likely reach out to our membership to ask them to reach out to their legislators to help educate them as to the negative impact they would be to maintaining appropriate consumer protection.

If you read the article to this point, it means that you are interested and willing to be engaged in these issues.

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OLCA 2017 Upcoming Events

MARCH

- 1 Portland Chapter Membership Meeting (Lucky Lab – Portland)
- 7 Central Oregon Chapter Meeting

APRIL

- 5 Portland Chapter Membership Meeting (Lucky Lab – Portland)
- 11 Central Oregon Chapter Meeting

MAY

- 3 Portland Chapter Membership Meeting (Rare Plant Research Nursery and Villa Catalana Cellars Winery – Portland)
- 9 Central Oregon Chapter Meeting

JUNE

- 2 OLCA/ASLA Golf Tournament Langdon Farms Golf Club – Aurora

JULY

- 28 OLCA Landscape Industry Certified Technician Exterior Program Test (Clackamas Community College – Oregon City)

SEPTEMBER

- 12 Central Oregon Chapter Meeting

OCTOBER

- 10 Central Oregon Chapter Meeting

NOVEMBER

- 7 Central Oregon Chapter Meeting

DECEMBER

- 12 NW Landscape Expo Pesticide Training
- 13 NW Landscape Expo

For more information about these events got to www.oregonlandscape.org

Health Insurance for Oregon Landscape Contractors

By Adam Harris, LaPorte and Associates

LaPorte understands the challenges facing the construction industry. We are an endorsed agency for 8 construction related associations. In addition, we are the managing general agency for the proprietary association health plan for each of those associations. These association health plans provide a potential safe harbor for small to medium sized employers from the volatility of the direct market. These multi-employer welfare arrangements allow companies in a similar industry to pool their risk in order to form one large purchasing pool. By creating this purchasing arrangement, these employers can collectively leverage their size for the purposes of buying insurance. In today's competitive hiring environment, employers can take advantage of this unique opportunity to attract and retain the highest quality talent.

Expertise & Experience

Navigating the ever changing environment of employee benefits has become increasingly difficult for employers regardless of size. LaPorte's goal is to partner with construction companies to

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

If that is the case, we would love to have you join the legislative committee as we are stronger with numbers. If interested in being involved with the legislative committee, contact Bob Grover, the current chair. You can reach him at Bob.Grover@pacscape.com

Key Features

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THE OLCA HEALTH PLAN RENEWS 5/1

Want more information? Contact Adam at 503.239.4116, aharris@laporte-insurance.com.

establish and implement benefits programs that fit with the industry's unique culture. Our experienced benefits team will advocate for your employees and their families so that they understand the value of your investment in their health and well-being.

Market Access

Determining the right carriers and plan designs for an organization's benefits requires a balance between the company's goals and the employee's needs. LaPorte's unique market access provides all the tools necessary to design and implement a benefits package that will satisfy both.

Additional Resources

LaPorte provides every client partner

access to INSource at no additional cost. INSource is designed to be a "one-stop" information resource for business owners, HR Professionals, Safety Coordinators, Risk Managers, as well as members of your management team. This valuable tool provides a more effective and efficient way to access information about compliance, human resources safety, risk management and wellness. The content includes policies and procedures, legislative updates, and employee communication materials.

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Cyber Security for Small Businesses

By Adam Harris, LaPorte and Associates

High-profile cyber attacks on companies such as Target and Sears have raised awareness of the growing threat of cyber crime. Recent surveys conducted by the Small Business Authority, Symantec, Kaspersky Lab and the National Cybersecurity Alliance suggest that many small business owners are still operating under a false sense of cyber security.

The statistics of these studies are grim; the vast majority of U.S. small businesses lack a formal Internet security policy for employees, and only about half have even rudimentary cybersecurity measures in place. Furthermore, only about a quarter of small business owners have had an outside party test their computer systems to ensure they are hacker proof, and nearly 40 percent do not have their data backed up in more than one location.

Don't Equate Small with Safe

Despite significant cybersecurity exposures, 85 percent of small business owners believe their company is safe from hackers, viruses, malware or a data breach. This disconnect is largely due to the widespread, albeit mistaken, belief that small businesses are unlikely targets for cyber attacks. In reality, data thieves are simply looking for the path of least resistance. Symantec's study found that 40 percent of attacks are against organizations with fewer than 500 employees.

Outside sources like hackers aren't the only way your company can be attacked—often, smaller companies

have a family-like atmosphere and put too much trust in their employees. This can lead to complacency, which is exactly what a disgruntled or recently fired employee needs to execute an attack on the business.

Attacks Could Destroy Your Business

As large companies continue to get serious about data security, small businesses are becoming increasingly attractive targets—and the results are often devastating for small business owners.

According to the Kaspersky Lab, the average annual cost of cyber attacks to small and medium-sized businesses was over \$200,000 in 2014.

Most small businesses don't have that kind of money lying around, and as a result, nearly 60 percent of the small businesses victimized by a cyber attack close permanently within six months of the attack. Many of these businesses put off making necessary improvements to their cyber security protocols until it was too late because they feared the costs would be prohibitive.

10 Ways to Prevent Cyber Attacks

Even if you don't currently have the resources to bring in an outside expert to test your computer systems and make security recommendations, there are simple, economical steps you can take to reduce your risk of falling victim to a costly cyber attack:

- Train employees in cyber security principles.
- Install, use and regularly update anti-virus and antispyware software on every computer used in your business.

- Use a firewall for your Internet connection.
- Download and install software updates for your operating systems and applications as they become available.
- Make backup copies of important business data and information.
- Control physical access to your computers and network components.
- Secure your Wi-Fi networks. If you have a Wi-Fi network for your workplace make sure it is secure and hidden.
- Require individual user accounts for each employee.
- Limit employee access to data and information, and limit authority to install software.
- Regularly change passwords.

In addition to the listed tips, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provides a tool for small businesses that can create and save a custom cyber security plan for your company, choosing from a menu of expert advice to address your specific business needs and concerns. It can be found at www.fcc.gov/cyberplanner.

Your Emerging Technology Partner

A data breach could cripple your small business, costing you thousands or millions of dollars in lost sales and/or damages. Contact LaPorte today. We have the tools necessary to ensure you have the proper coverage to protect your company against losses from cyber attacks.

Courtesy of LaPorte & Associates and Zywave, Adam Harris, CIC, Owner, Vice President, aharris@laporte-insurance.com, 971-404-3761