

# NJPA REAL ESTATE JOURNAL

Friday, August 27, 2004

COVERING THE STATES OF NEW JERSEY AND PENNSYLVANIA

By Scott Dare, Dare Living Associates

## When to bid maintenance? Fall vs. Spring?

**W**hen to build maintenance? Fall vs. Spring? — Every year we receive great news in April. We were awarded the landscape maintenance for a commercial account. The customers are usually an established business that offers us a great opportunity. But there is one problem. We have committed our landscape resources by early February for the landscape season.

Good problem? Not really, because many labor hours are spent preparing an estimate for a client. Measuring the landscape beds (mulch & stone) and turf area for exact square footage takes time. If snow is on the ground for many weeks, it only compounds the task.

By early February, landscape beds are being edged and chemicals are applied. Spring clean ups are implemented and cold-tolerant pan-

nies are planted for color.

It cost between \$55,000 to \$65,000 to outfit a landscape

for labor costs, material costs (chemicals, mulch, tools, uniforms, etc.), and the unknown.

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***So why should companies award their landscape maintenance by Dec. 1st? The Boy Scouts' motto comes to mind. Always be prepared! Prepare for labor costs, material costs (chemicals, mulch, tools, uniforms, etc.), and the unknown.***

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crew with equipment. Training of personnel and creating a route that is cost effective are important issues for a landscape maintenance firm to consider. The window of opportunity to turn a profit is short. A landscape maintenance company in the Philadelphia area has a window of 6-7 months to provide maintenance.

So why should companies award their landscape maintenance by Dec. 1st? The Boy Scouts' motto comes to mind. Always be prepared! Prepare

Now a company has two months to pre-plan their landscape schedule for the new season.

The choice is simple. Implementing a plan on the run (April) vs. two months (Dec./Jan.) to purchase equipment, hiring additional employees and implement a well thought out maintenance plan.

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