

# **Standards**

For The

# **Landscape Lighting**

# **Designer**

---

**A Guide to  
Defining the Practice,  
Expectations, and  
Scope of Work**

**January 1, 2015  
Revised Jan. 2018**

**By Mark A. Carlson**

**Avalon Lighting Design ©2015**

# Table of Contents

<b>What is Landscape Lighting?</b>	<b>Pg. 3</b>
<b>Defining the Practice</b>	<b>Pg. 4</b>
Landscape Lighting Designers	Pg. 4
Practitioners	Pg. 5
Professionals	Pg. 5
Educational Programs & Accreditation	Pg. 7
Trade Associations & Industry Organizations	Pg. 7
Criteria for Selection of Service Provider	Pg. 7
<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Pg. 9</b>
Qualifications	Pg. 9
Compensation for Services	Pg. 10
Performance	Pg. 11
‘Professional’ Status	Pg. 12
Types of Work	Pg. 12
Location of Work	Pg. 13
<b>Scope of Work</b>	<b>Pg. 14</b>
Definitions	Pg. 14
Common Working Parameters	Pg. 14

## **IMPORTANT NOTE**

This document is Not an official and accepted source. It is part of a thoughtful initiative **to better standardize the Landscape Lighting Trade Professions.**

There is No current Standard and there are No defining measures for this saturated service market. Therefore, this is an attempt to do so.

Consumers can consider these inclusions as a **Guide in Qualifying** a confusing and unmanaged industry. In addition, they can best determine who should be considered a ‘Practitioner’ versus that of a ‘Professional’.

The goal of implementing these Standards is to **Classify and Separate levels of experience** in this profession. A listing of Terms and Definitions will also aid in this understanding.

# What is Landscape Lighting?

**Landscape Lighting** is commonly known as Outdoor Lighting, Garden Lighting and even, Malibu Lighting. It pertains to the illumination of gardens, landscapes, and nature, as well as the structural and physical elements within or around these softer, living forms. It should be known that “outdoor” lighting can include roadways, parking areas, etc., so this is not an accurate term. Architectural lighting is a term used for structural lighting, as applied to only those conditions. And Garden lighting was the original and older term used for what is now known as Landscape lighting.

**Landscape Lighting Design** is a highly specialized encompasses any ‘landscaped’ areas that are illuminated, whether exterior or interior. This profession, as it relates to lighting design, requires both technical knowledge and creative ability. **These are learned experiences that take time and practice to perfect.** Additionally, they require actual hands-on, field experience. One cannot become an expert, nor can they be considered professional without having first-hand knowledge and practice of installing these lighting systems.

The most important skill of this field experience is in the aiming and focusing of light fixtures at night. It cannot be learned by reading a book or through designing only.

Landscape Lighting most always involves the outdoor, natural environment. However, there are some settings within structures that include atria, green houses and interior gardens. These spaces are generally treated the same as exterior environments. The difference is normally seen or felt in their confinement by protective walls.

Field experience and time are the true measures for truth and professionalism within the landscape lighting profession. It’s not uncommon for the consumer to be fooled into thinking that “anyone” or specifically, any contractor can effectively perform this work. This is a big problem today and will continue to be until measures are established to define ‘good’ landscape lighting.

**Consumer Awareness is lacking.** Poor to mediocre outcomes have become the norm and this is even true with those ‘white-collar’ professionals practicing this work. This includes many landscape architects, landscape designers, interior designers, and architects. The problem they have is that they “think” they know enough to give this work justice, but it’s more likely an over-inflated ego. Most of these types lack any field experience and they operate off of one or two courses in their education or a specifiers binder laying around the office. This must change, if we are ever going to advance.

This profession requires a thorough understanding of both light and plant materials—they go together, hand-in-hand. Those that are considered the best in this field understand this relationship and they typically have 10 to 20, or more years of experience. Additionally, the best in this field usually have performed every aspect of the profession and it’s their only business—landscape lighting. One should question those companies which offer multiple trades or disciplines under the same contract.

# Defining the Practice

Landscape lighting must be defined before any actions or decisions are made. The process of defining this practice will help the consumer to determine a measurable scale of what is 'acceptable' or 'not acceptable' in one's background, work and skill set. This form of understanding has Not ever been defined by any organization or regulating authority. The reasoning for this is clear—for the Betterment of the Industry.

The following is part of an initiative to define and understand expectations, whether it is meant for the Consumer or the Tradesperson/Professional. This establishment is for ALL:

(Note: some of these term descriptions were provided by the English Encarta Dictionary):

- **Lighting Design/Landscape Lighting Design**—are terms used to describe the design of lighting in an environment. However, 'lighting design' implies light within or at any area. 'Landscape lighting design' implies only to those areas consisting of plants or nature—usually outdoors. A design is a graphical representation or form of creative drawing, which expresses an intent through vision. The 'Design Intent' is just that—the intent of the designer. At a minimum, the landscape lighting design should identify what and where lighting equipment is to be located on a property or job site.

Lighting designs can be more detailed and these are precise 'working drawings.' They provide the necessary information to locate and install the lighting equipment. They specify details such as, lighting schedules, details, specifications, and notes. The goal here is to provide all details so that the installation contractor can fully understand what, where and how to install these items.

- **Landscape Lighting**—a general term that can be used for the actual discipline or craft service of illuminating nature and those spaces that include plantings. Normally, these locations are exposed to the climate and outdoor environmental conditions, but they can be interior and protected spaces, too.

**Lighting Designer/Landscape Lighting Designer**—a general title for the individual who develops the design intent of the project. This person will aid in controlling all the details of how the job is installed. In some cases, this is the same person as the installation contractor, and these are usually the best circumstances for ensuring the project meets the designer's intent.

Unfortunately, this title is not governed and has no real parameters. To date, no authority or organization has developed a set of measurable standards for this role. Therefore, anyone can claim to be a landscape lighting designer. It is for this reason that a listing of expectations was established--**see Expectations of the Landscape Lighting Designer.**

**NOTE:** one should consider what the world-renowned Lighting Designer, Mr. Howard Brandston, wrote, as he discussed this title:

**"One can be expected to be classified as a Lighting Designer, if they have produced a reasonable amount of work."**

**Practitioner**—somebody who practices a profession. This term is not normally used in the landscape lighting profession. The title of ‘Practitioner’ should be utilized by all Landscape Lighting Designers who have not obtained the level of ‘Professional’, as defined in this document. The reason for this is to establish a minimum level of criteria or expectation in job performance, so that advancement can be obtained. It also aids the Consumer in identifying experience levels in a simple fashion.

**‘Practitioner’ Experience**

<b>Novice or Beginner</b>	<2 years in business	<75 jobs installed
<b>Intermediate</b>	2-6 years in business	75-300 jobs installed
<b>Advanced</b>	>6 years in business	>300 jobs installed

**NOTE:** These numbers are what is considered normal for start-up and early business models within this craft. Additionally, most new businesses fail within 5 years of starting. Therefore, No landscape lighting business will be considered, ‘Advanced’ until they reach this 5-year mark.

There are two categories in this chart to measure time and experience. These aid in controlling who might advance prematurely, as they both account for this level of experience and growth. If there is a scenario where a lighting designer only performs in the design capacity, then they could easily surpass the 75 jobs limit at the Novice level. They are maintained at this level until they can account for 2-years within this position, before advancing.

**Professional**—a term or title largely used by both the trade and the consumer that is grossly misrepresented. There are No parameters for this designation and the following can aid in this control. I share in the same opinion as Mr. Howard Brandston:

**“One can only become a Professional when one makes a recognized contribution to the profession. That recognition must come from one’s peers.”**

This title needs to have a minimum set of parameters associated with it, if it is to truly mean anything. Otherwise, everyone will continue to claim to be “professional.” This simple understanding makes good and practical sense for the betterment of the profession. The inclusion of these expectations then provides ‘value’ and relevance to this title.

**‘Professional’ Experience**

<b>Professional</b>	>6-years in business	>300 jobs installed
---------------------	----------------------	---------------------

As described above, the ‘Professional’ should have been **‘Recognized’** by his/her peers in the lighting trade or lighting industry for a **‘Contribution to the Profession’**. This is the only real measure of success by those at this level.

In addition to these two controlling elements, the ‘Professional’ should be able to perform the following:

- To effectively aim and focus landscape lighting fixtures to achieve desired results
- To implement, manage and control landscape lighting projects
- To create and develop landscape lighting designs (plans)

- **Expert**—is a person who is very skillful or has advanced training and knowledge in a particular area or field. They are likely to be widely recognized as a reliable source, and who can provide wise, just, or right decision-making.

**NOTE:** Due to this definition, one should only be classified as an ‘Expert’ if they have obtained the experience level of a ‘Professional’. Too many make the unproven claim that they are “experts” or “professionals” without any credits to stand behind. This is a huge disservice to the Consumer market, as they are the one’s needing to understand this claim.

- **Discipline**—a term used to describe the work or services provided under this profession. It is a form of regulation with the work performed, as it requires logical steps. These steps are part of the design process. Many professionals describe this process, as an art-form.
- **Contractor**—this is the trade person who is normally required to install the landscape lighting equipment. The equipment used to provide this lighting is typically of a low voltage, 12-volt nature. Although, some lightings systems are high voltage, 120-volt, and require a licensed electrician to perform this level of installation.

Unfortunately, most anyone can work with low voltage systems and not every state in the United States requires a contractor’s license.

- **Owner/Owner’s Rep**—the Owner is the Consumer or End-user which is hiring to have the work performed—they “own” the project. There are times when the Owner will utilize a person of choice to act as the Owner’s Representative (Owner’s Rep). These people will coordinate the activities between the lighting designer and the lighting contractor, as well as many other activities on the job. They will be responsible for all transactions related to these improvement needs.
- **Trade/Craft**—terms used to describe a profession or activity that requires skill and training, or experience or a specialized knowledge of the subject matter. Trades or crafts are the form of skill required in making or doing things by hand.
- **Profession**—an occupation that requires extensive education, experience, and/or specialized training. It can also serve as a term to describe the people who practice a trade, art or craft.
- **Art-form**—a creative activity or type of artistic expression that is intended to be thought-provoking or beautiful. It is something that is done in such a skillful or sophisticated way that it can be considered artistic. Unfortunately, art is generally considered subjective, so it is difficult to truly measure what is good versus not good. Many professionals classify their work as an art-form. Unfortunately, many practitioners use this term to describe their works and it’s a very subjective term—art is in the eye of the beholder. There is no defining means to classify what is or is not art.

It is highly suggested that one “consider” and evaluate this term based on one’s experience level.

## Educational Programs & Accreditation

Currently, there are no accredited or professional schools that are specifically providing educational degrees for the Landscape Lighting Design discipline.

It should be noted that there is the **International Landscape Lighting Institute (ILLI)**, which is provided through the University of Oklahoma. However, this non-profit group mission is to “inform, educate, and promote the art and technology of landscape lighting.” They only provide an annual opportunity of about one week to gather individuals in this learning experience. It’s a good start but falls short of providing an educational curriculum beyond this period. The hope is that a 4-year college program might be established.

## Trade Associations & Industry Organizations

There is only one trade association in the U.S.A. dedicated to landscape lighting—the **Association of Outdoor Lighting Professionals (AOLP)**. They have been in existence since 2001 and maintain about (200+ members). They primarily serve the trade and provide both entry and mid-levels of education to its members. Once again, this offering only occurs annually at their 3-day conference setting. They offer two certifications to their membership:

- **Certified Low Voltage Lighting Technician (CLVLT)**—established ~2003 for the standardization of the trade and their practices.
- **Certified Outdoor Lighting Designer (COLD)**—established in 2011 for the advancement and standardization of the outdoor, landscape lighting designer. It takes 3 to 4 years to complete this certification, because they only offer a few classes each year at the conference and one must complete all the classes in order to be awarded this title.

Even though one might obtain a certification, they should not be valued the same as a formal educational foundation. Most of this learning comes from attending seminars. Please understand that this is not bad, rather it’s meant for understanding these differences. Any form of education and knowledge building is a step towards advancement and that is encouraged.

The lighting industry has two recognizable authorities--the **Illumination Engineering Society, North America (IESNA)** and the **International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD)**. Both groups do not have a separate classification or distinct component for Landscape Lighting Design, as it typically falls under the term, Outdoor Lighting Design. The IESNA has a membership of (+8,000 members) and the IALD has (+1,400 members). Unfortunately, the landscape lighting profession has no real voice in their efforts.

## Criteria for Selection of Service Provider

Of all those providing landscape lighting as a service, whether as a lighting designer or an installer/contractor, who should best fit this classification of ‘Professional’? The following could allow the Consumer to quickly identify providers in this selection:

1. **Years of Experience Performing this Work**—we have discussed this earlier in the chart, as it provides a relative scale and measure towards how much time an individual or company has in the profession.
2. **Is the Service Provider Exclusive in Landscape Lighting?**—this is pertinent to identify those companies that **ONLY** perform landscape lighting versus those that provide lighting as “part” of their business, whatever that may be.

3. **Is the Service Provider a Contractor & Designer?**—this generally identifies those that are a complete package having both sets of skills versus those who only do design and others who just install.
4. **Does this Service Provider have any licenses, certifications or other credentials?**—this is more of a standard question to learn more about what skills they've acquired.
5. **Does this Service Provider have any Awards to his/her credit?**—this consideration should be taken with a grain-of-salt, because there are many awards given by manufacturers, magazines, and others related to the lighting industry that have no real credibility. Therefore, consider “where” the award is coming from and ask, “is it a leading authority in this realm?”
6. **Where and What type of work best Represents this Service Provider?**—these aspects should be considered, as maybe the service provider is from another area or state. If they are not familiar with the location of your property, then have they ever done work which is Not local to them?

Have they ever managed projects in different cities, states or even outside of the country you reside? Does this provider do primarily residential, commercial or some other form of work? This consideration is important to identify how well they manage and consider outside influences to the job.

7. **What Type of Products and Materials are being offered?**—although most Consumers do not know what is best for their needs, it's important to question what is being offered. Materials can be researched to determine what is best. Typically, the Quality of product, the Construction and Durability, and the Life of the products are of interest here. What kind of warranty backs each item? Each service provider will provide different options as part of their offering.

The purpose of this criteria and selection process is to provide a means to separate the 'Good' from the 'Not so Good'. These questions measure one against the other so that the Consumer can make the most informed decision about those they are working with. It also supports the concept of 'Raising the Bar' in the industry.

It's most important to protect the Consumer, as well as preserving those who do a good job. This goes hand-in-hand as every positive relationship does. Safety is another important element within this trade because one is working with electricity. Even though this is considered, Low Voltage, it can still be dangerous in the wrong hands. Inexperience and disrespect of this fact are always problematic.

Additionally, it should be known that this profession has very few regulations. Therefore, many will take advantage of this and do things they shouldn't because nobody is enforcing standards and practices. It is here that Consumer Awareness is needed.

Most Consumers do Not spend anytime trying to understand this practice—they typically take the word of those selling them their services. And many falsify information or do whatever it takes to gain the job.

There are two governing controls established for the safety and protection of the consumer--the **National Electric Code (NEC)** and the Standards established by **Underwriter's Laboratory (UL)**. These need to be utilized or referenced as part of the landscape lighting process.

# Expectations of the Landscape Lighting Designer

## Qualifications

Every Consumer should question and/or evaluate the Service Provider's qualifications. Although this can be challenging, it should be one of the first things he or she does. This protective measure will save the Consumer much heartache if things don't go as expected. Too many times, the Consumer only has themselves to blame when they fail to "qualify" a service provider. The success and outcome of the project depends upon it.

One of the best ways to qualify is by speaking directly to the customers of this service provider. Ask for customers that have 'like' projects to yours, and then plan to speak or even visit with them. Ask to see the project personally. Even though this can be time consuming, it will guarantee what the provider claims. Referrals and work history are great in weeding out those who cannot perform.

Note: It should be a big 'red flag' when the service provider cannot supply a list of references, as well as find any local job for you to visit. This includes providing any references to call. Don't be fooled into their hype of how great they are. Walk away while you can and without any losses.

Unfortunately, most Consumers do Not perform these qualifying measures.

There is another means to help qualify a service provider—ask to see his/her website and portfolio of graphic works. Any true professional or practitioner will easily be able to show you their work through either of these formats. A website should be able to key you into how professional they are as a business person and as to how information is provided on them. Look at the following:

- **About Us/Team or Staff Backgrounds**—see if there are employees and if they look proper for the position they are in. How long have these team members been with the company? Is it a big company or a small company? Sometimes this matters, as well as timing to perform the work.
- **Establishment Date**—see if there are any misrepresentations from what he/she told you in how long they have been around. Have they always perform this function of Landscape Lighting or were they a Landscaper for most of their service time and only started doing lighting a year ago?
- **Gallery or Portfolio of Works**—this is the true measure of quality and creativeness. One should carefully look at these photos to see if they are look good, are moving, and portray what you desire for your own project. However, one likely won't know if these are the service provider's own work. There are some who steal others work and act like it's their own. This is why it is important to ask to physically see or visit a local job site.
- **Awards**—this will provide information on the actually awards this service provider is suggesting they have won. Verify the source of these awards and visit those websites which awarded these individuals. Again, it's extra work, but if you cannot find proof of these actual awards, then this should be another 'red flag' as to if these providers are telling you the truth.

The point to all of this is to ensure that your service provider is honest, ethical, and proven in his or her abilities.

Another form of qualification is by what credentials the Landscape Lighting Designer has. This can be in the following:

- **Training or Experience**—these learning’s should concentrate primarily in lighting (electricity, applications, technologies, physics, and theory). Also, because of the relationship we have with Nature, one would expect these individuals to have a relevant understanding and knowledge of plants. This combination of experience is crucial for a successful outcome. The best landscape lighting designers have an extensive knowledge of both Light and Nature/Plant materials.
- **Contractor’s License**—a contractor’s license is not required for the performance and service of the landscape lighting designer. However, if the designer is performing the installation work, then it might be required in certain states. One should ask the following questions: What type of license is it? When was it issued to the contractor? Is it an active or inactive license? Which state was it issued in? And lastly, determine if there are any negative marks against them with the state licensing board.
- **Insurances**—it should be noted that most designers do not have the same insurance needs as those who install these lighting systems. However, some designers may choose to employ “Errors & Omissions” insurance (E & O), especially if working on larger scale or commercial projects. The only other form of insure that might be required of this individual would be Liability insurance (for installation works) and Workman’s Compensation insurance for any employees.
- **Specialized Degrees**—currently, there are no degree programs (4-year degrees) offered by a major university, as it relates to Landscape Lighting Design.
- **Specialized Certifications**—there are a few different certification offerings available for those involved with lighting, lighting design, and many other aspects associated with this trade. The key factor here is to truly understand what it is the service provider achieved. Was it a one-day course, or several hours? Was it a week-long program? Ask the question, did everyone who paid to attend automatically get the ‘certification’ or was there an exam that one had to pass? Was the program provided by an accredited school or college, or was it a session provided by a distributor or manufacturer? The point here is, is it of relevance?

## Compensation for Services

This is a sensitive area, because many are not accustomed to fees, as associated with landscape lighting design. For many years, the majority in this profession did not charge for their design time. This precedent set the stage for the rest to follow, but this is a poor business practice. This time spent needs to be recovered. If it is not, then it is a business loss. This act not only is hurtful to your business, but it discredits the profession by placing no value on this service.

What might one be expected to pay for a landscape lighting designer’s service? Not only is this a sensitive or challenging question to ask about the landscape lighting profession, but that of many trades who deal with design. The best answer is that it is all depends upon one’s level of experience. The following chart is a rough estimation at best, as no formal survey has been performed and rates may vary across the country or world, to help identify Landscape Lighting Designer Rates:

### **Estimated Rates for Landscape Lighting Designers**

<b>‘Practitioner’—Novice or Beginner</b>	(No charge) or \$0 to \$25/hr.
<b>‘Practitioner’—Intermediate</b>	\$25 to \$65/hr.
<b>‘Practitioner’—Advanced</b>	\$65 to \$100/hr.
<b>‘Professional’</b>	\$100 to \$300/hr. or a Retainer Fee based on the Scope of Work

Is there an acceptable time Not to Charge for lighting design services? The answer is 'yes,' when the lighting designer is a Novice and has very little experience. The reason for this is because experience needs to be established first, so that the designer can prove his/her value to the customer.

'Professionals' will charge for any of their services—this is a common expectation. It is common for most all levels of Practitioners to charge for their time and if they don't, this is another 'red flag' to the legitimacy of their abilities or how they realistically charge for the job installed.

## **Performance**

What can one expect as it relates to the Landscape Lighting Designer's Performance? Obviously, this will be relative to their experience level. The general understanding is that you will get more and usually have a better outcome by working with those that are experienced. The advantages are that you will be more efficient in the processes and you'll avoid complications with an experience designer.

However, will this be the case for every relationship—"No". Again, this profession is unchallenged to follow any standardization and No regulatory element has oversight over what is currently being done. In general, Performance expectations should consist of the following:

- **Technical Knowledge**—the landscape lighting designer should have enough technical knowledge to fully understand the lighting systems they are designing. This includes the understandings of these electrical components, system load balancing, voltage drop, and the product capabilities.
- **Lighting Applications**—the landscape lighting designer should have a good understanding of the basic lighting applications which can be applied by the various light fixtures used. This is the artistic aspect of the design process and it is through this application that effects are generated. The positioning of light fixtures is the other component of good design. All of this is normally referred to as the 'aiming and focusing' of light fixtures. It is in this understanding where one's level of experience is exposed.

Note: It is in the applications of light where you can best see who is experienced or not. Some may not know or care to know and just place a light source at one location, leave it and move on. Some may move lights several times because they really don't know what is best for positioning a light. And lastly, some may only know of one or two ways to illuminate a subject, and that's it. This is troubling and there are No rules to follow.

- **Organizational Skills**—as with any business, one would expect a professional approach, including that of being organized. This ability should be expected by those seasoned in the trade or those with experience. The reason for this is to provide a measure for calm, trust, and management of the project. Not only does this category include being able to efficiently move throughout each step of the design process, but it involves the element of time management. Schedules should be identified, implemented and achieved according to the time line given.
- **Communication**—the landscape lighting designer needs to not only lead the project through completion, but they need to facilitate timely communications between all associated parties. Proper communication includes effective listening skills. An experienced designer should be able to manage these functions.
- **Quality Assurance**—because the landscape lighting designer is specifying the materials and equipment to be used on the project, they should also be the ones to manage the quality assurance of the job. An experienced designer will know how the installation of these materials will occur. They may or may not

be a contractor, but they need to understand and ensure the customer that proper methods are used in this installation.

- **Leadership and Control**—the landscape lighting designer is the only effective person to control the outcome of the landscape lighting design. Those with proven experience and ability should be able to maneuver through any project with multiple service providers and maintain control or authority over those installing this work. This is where many are unproven. The Consumer needs to know that this is a vulnerable area to the landscape lighting designer. Again, experienced leadership will ensure the design intent is achieved.

## **‘Professional’ Status**

For those Consumers that desire the best possible design solution or artistic creativity in their projects, then you should find yourself a proven ‘Professional’, as defined within this Guide. It should be understood that this level of commitment might not fit the budgetary needs of some people. This is YOUR CHOICE, but this is what separates those with proven abilities over what currently exists—mediocrity. There is great value in experience and artistic ability.

The following is a summation chart to identify ‘why’ one would be considered a ‘Professional’ and it’s based on their Contributions to the Profession, as well as being Recognized by Peers. This defining control will greatly separate the masses and limit your choices, which is highly necessary in today’s environment.

By definition: a **‘Professional’ has been recognized by his/her peers for making a contribution to the profession**—see chart below:

### **‘Professional’ Contributions**

<b>Recognized for a Landscape Lighting project of Significance (+) 6-yrs in business</b>
<b>Recognized for a Qualified Research, as related to Landscape Lighting (+) 6-yrs. in business</b>
<b>Recognized for an Advancing Technology or Advancing Process related to Landscape Lighting (+) have experience as an ‘Intermediate Practitioner’</b>
<b>Recognized for Teaching or Training in the Field of Landscape Lighting for &gt;10-years (+) have experience as an ‘Intermediate Practitioner’</b>
<b>Recognized for Developing an Advanced or Accredited Educational Program related to Landscape Lighting (+) have experience as an ‘Intermediate Practitioner’</b>

Some may find these Contributions too stringent or confining, so that many will not be classified in this manner, but this is necessary to provide an authority type level where experience matters. If the bar which to measure one’s ability is set too low, then the field will be crowded and undefining. This only serves to help the Consumer to separate experience levels.

## **Types of Work**

Another means to measure or separate those ‘Professionals’ or ‘Practitioners’ is by the **types of work that they have performed**. Each classification of landscape lighting designer will have an area of specialty or expertise through the type of work they most commonly perform. This should be known and understood by all Consumers. The following is a partial listing of the common Landscape Lighting specializations:

- **Residential**—single-family & multi-family, custom, estate properties, etc.
- **Commercial**—retail & wholesale, offices, life-style centers, etc.
- **Industrial**—warehouses & storage facilities, schools & institutions, manufacturing, etc,
- **Hospitality**—hotels, resorts, villas, wineries, casinos, amusement parks, restaurants, etc.
- **Parks & Atria**—public & private gardens, atria, etc.
- **Natural Environments**—these might be open spaces, forests, etc.

The Landscape Lighting Designer should have a basic understanding of what percentage their works are of each type, as listed above. This is another aid to the Consumer in knowing who might be best suited for a particular job. For example, if a designer works 95% of the time on residential, they may not be best choice for an industrial project.

## **Location of Work**

Another means to aid the Consumer is to **evaluate where the ‘Professional’ has performed his/her work**. Most landscape lighting designers work in a local or regional community and have never worked outside of these zones. One should consider if they have any experience working at distances away, or out of state (nationally), and even out of the country (internationally).

Why does it matter where one has worked? This can be crucial to those Consumers who are looking to have a lighting designer provide for them outside of the ‘normal’ working conditions. There are MANY great challenges to working outside of one’s regional area, but it particularly addresses one’s Organizational skills. Additionally, these jobs outside of the norm are much more stressful—they require patience, excessive planning, and excellent management skills to achieve successful results. Also, they place a lot of attention on the Scheduling of activities, so that budgets and completion dates are met.

Most landscape lighting designers have never worked outside of their local arena. The Consumer should ask to speak with those project owners that were included as these distant projects—this direct feedback will provide valuable information as to how the job was managed, and if the budget and scheduling were met.

The Consumer should understand these ‘distant projects’ to unfamiliar locations include:

- **Climatic conditions**—sun, rain, humidity, wind, etc.
- **Materials acquisition problems**—access to vendors, equipment, and material products.
- **Labor acquisition problems**—access to qualified laborers or contractors, etc.
- **Work Permits & Passports**—ability to work when in other locations
- **Customs, Tariffs & Taxes**—this is very important in international work.
- **Plant types & varying landscape conditions**—plant types, soil conditions, terrain, etc.
- **Insects & animal problems**—many environments provide varying levels of dangerous exposure.
- **Accommodation & travel**—projects vary greatly in size and in time to complete.
- **Personal wellness, food, water & sanitation conditions**—understanding these is essential.

Lastly, seasoned professionals and practitioners performing under these conditions will also have a “Back-up Plan” for problems, encounters and hardships. Crisis conditionals occur—be ready and take preventative measures as best you can. Consumers and project owners who are Not aware of this will be in for a rude awakening when the cost to perform work sky-rockets due to these scenarios. The point here is to consider if it’s worth taking that chance on a project like this with those that are Not seasoned in performing under these conditional states.

# Scope of Work

This is a term used more so in contract law and with the contract agreements that the Landscape Lighting Designer must utilize with their services. The Scope of Work normally identifies the parameters under which the parties involved must consent to. Basically, it is a description of the work and how it is to be performed.

## Definitions

- **Scope of Work**—this is a detailed description and division of the work to be performed under a contract. Typically, it is defined in such a way to allow for it to be broken out into specific tasks to accomplish and include a time-line. This break out can also aid in the separation of progress payments.
- **Project Scope**—the work that needs to be accomplished to deliver a product, service or result with the specified features and functions. It relates to the “**How**” of the job and is work-oriented.
- **Product Scope**—the features and functions that characterize a product, service or result. It applies to the “**What**” of the job and they are functional requirements.
- **Scope Creep**—refers to the incremental expansion of the Scope of Work. It may include and introduce more requirements that were not part of the initial planning of the project. These changes cause added and unnecessary hardships on the Designer or Contractor by impacting both schedules and budgets. These problems normally arise after job implementation begins.

## Common Working Parameters

This set of parameters has been established as a **basic format and role progression for the Landscape Lighting Designer**. Although, each situation and each Designer may be different, it is a guide to build upon and utilize. The following list provides a description of these measures:

1. **Perform Initial customer/owner meeting at the actual project site.** This meeting should include all decision-making parties, so that acceptance can be made for the working arrangements.
2. **Identification and acceptance of both designer and owner performance expectations.** This should include the Designer’s need to oversee/control all activities, as related to Landscape Lighting. This also includes to what extent the designer will be involved or in control of the project.
3. **Gather information necessary for the project.** This includes existing plans & photos, contact information, access codes or passes, and a listing of all sub-contractors working on the site during the Landscape Lighting phase.
4. **Perform a site analysis and walk-through of any phased work zones.**
5. **Negotiate all terms, conditions, and payment arrangements between Designer and Owner.**
6. **Determine the type of Landscape Lighting plan required for the project**—conceptual plan vs. detailed working drawings.

- 7. Prepare calculations for the job cost, including preliminary budget figures.** This should be based upon the conceptual lighting plan work and offered to assist the Owner for the final job cost.
- 8. Determine the installation contractor to utilize on the project.** This will require the Lighting Designer to review all bid packages in the selection process. The installation contractor is to work hand-in-hand with the Lighting Designer. The designer should ensure all installation methods and standard practices. The Designer may be required to provide a set of specifications and Standards to accomplish this task.
- 9. Prepare a schedule for installation activities and a time-line for task completions.** Ensure all sub-contractors are accepting to this schedule.
- 10. Perform the locating of all fixtures to be utilized on the project by flagging these locations.** This includes the initial walk-through of the job site with the installation Contractor.
- 11. Perform the role of oversight authority for all work associated with the Landscape Lighting installation process.** This includes quality control and quality assurance, as it relates to products and services.
- 12. Perform or oversee all aiming and focusing procedures for each lighting fixture.** This is the only means to ensure the proper design intent.
- 13. Perform a final walk-through with the Owner and installation Contractor upon work completion.**
- 14. Identify all changes to the original lighting plan and update the final As-build plan.** Ensure that copies are made available to the Owner, installation Contractor, and future maintenance service provider.
- 15. Select a future maintenance service provider.** Ensure this provider is capable to perform any work on the Landscape Lighting equipment installed. Also, ensure that a service schedule is prepared for a minimum of one-year.
- 16. Identify and arrangement for any future, required Landscape Lighting Designer services.** This should include and re-positioning or re-aiming efforts to ensure the original design intent of the job. It should include all future documentation efforts, as required to keep the As-build plan current and accurate.