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Reality Check

Here are the economic facts: unemployment rates rise and fall, the housing market dwindles and surges, and the consumer confidence index increases and declines. What's more, these assorted metrics and markers seem to be as variable and unpredictable these days as the weather itself. And like the weather, sometimes it seems as if there's not much we can do about it.

Tom Iacobucci, founder and president of Mountain View Landscape, is convinced that there is one thing we can do to help weather whatever economic storms come our way, and that's to keep up the aesthetics and integrity of outdoor landscaping. Improving and maintaining beautiful lawns, manicured gardens and enduring walkways can help build confidence, optimism and value, even when the economic metrics surrounding you are moderately miserable.

"It's not just my own enthusiasm that allows many homeowners and commercial facility managers to realize the benefits of expert ground care and enhancement. It's also the fact that most of them already



seem to understand two immutable facts: one, the significance of a first impression can never be underestimated, and two, just knowing that what is outside of your home or office is gorgeous, safe and sound somehow gives you the strength to carry on. It makes the road ahead, no matter how steep, seem achievable and worthwhile."

Tom is pleased to report that the skill, care, expertise, creativity and customer service for which Mountain View is known is being utilized and enjoyed by a strong customer base that is as positive and assertive as he is.

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Mountain View's Personal Ford f550 and mowing trailer

Reality Check

(continued)

“Economically speaking, you never know exactly what’s going to happen,” Tom adds. “Unemployment was down a few points in the late summer from where it was earlier in the spring, and that was good. Then came sequestration, and now we have the government shutdown. But what happens out there in economy-land has never, and will never, affect what Mountain View Landscape can do for customers quickly and affordably. Fortunately for us, it doesn’t even seem to affect what our customers want and need us to do for them. I guess they really do understand the value.”

We conducted a brief reality check on social media to see how many others agree with Tom’s assertion. Every respondent—all of them professionals from Central Connecticut—concur. Here’s a sample of what they said:

“The typical Baby Boomer has learned the realities of booms and busts. The economy ebbs and flows, but pride in ownership is always a strength that should never waiver, and keeping home landscaping in good shape shows pride in ownership.”

—Tom, portfolio manager

I write for an insurance agency blog and know that keeping your home looking good both on the inside and outside shows

commitment and good values, which in turn can help in the insurance underwriting process. Also, will overgrown weeds and bushes next to your house be seen as a claim risk for burglary or foundation damage? Often when you keep it well maintained, you won’t have to worry about finding out the hard way.”

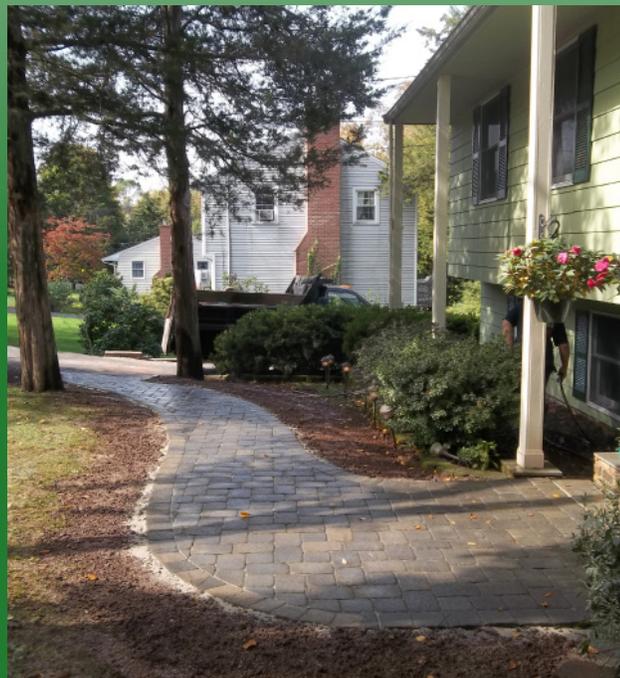
For better or worse we live in a society where perception and impressions are lasting. If you choose to keep your landscaping unkempt and sloppy, you’ll be noticed for that. There are several houses in my neighborhood that are in that category, and trust me, they’re the talk of the neighborhood.”

—Karen, corporate trainer

A year ago, Mountain View Landscape did in fact feel a slight pinch due to economic stress at the time. But the company simply forged ahead because Tom and his customers know that the first step to improvement and recovery is the ability to feel good. And feeling good can happen when you step out of your front door or pull into your driveway.



Process of making a new walkway



Tom's Tips

Tom's Gardening and Yard Tips to Keep and Maintain a Beautiful Yard.



Owner Tom Iacobucci

It's that time of year to cut back all your perennials and remove all the leaves from the garden beds and lawn. I've been in this business for over 20 years and see people make the same mistakes. Here are some pointers I have noticed over the years that will keep and maintain a healthy lawn.

Good Compost

Your yard 'waste' is what good compost and mulch are made of! Chopping up the leaves using a lawn mower not only cleans up your yard but also composts the leaves much faster. I use these compost leaves because they are very helpful in protecting your garden.

Protect Gardens

To prevent your bare garden from erosion during the harsh winters, I simply cover the soil with a layer of mulch in the fall. Bare soil is a prime

target for erosion over the winter from rainwater and snow melt moving across it, which robs your soil from nutrients of this precious resource and contributes to water pollution. Take advantage of your dropped leaves in the fall. I usually collect the leaves after they all drop with the bagger attachment of the lawn mower; then I spread the chopped leaves over the bare soil surface. Come spring, just mix the partially decomposed leaves into the soil as you prepare the beds for planting.

Cutting Hydrangeas

I've noticed my customers with hydrangeas tend to have a misconception that you should cut back the stems all the way down to the ground. The right way to actually do this for your endless blooming hydrangeas is to let them die back for the winter season and then in the spring when it starts to bud, cut it back to your second or third bud, depending on the height you want it to be.

Put your spring bulbs in the ground now to prepare for your beautiful spring flowers.

Protect Trees

To prevent sunscald and cracking of bark, which can lead to disease on young trees, I spray the foliage of tree trunks in the fall with anti desiccant spray or wrap them with commercially available tree wrap. This prevents insects from making home and killing the young trees.

Prepare for Winter

Before you put your lawn mower away for the season make sure to change the oil. You should also either put in a fuel stabilizer, which will keep the gas fresh or just drain the gas out by running the motor dry.

As winter season is upon us make sure to check your snow blowers now so they work and not wait until the first snowfall to find out the bad news.



Mowing the leaves for good compost