

Tips for Hiring a Lawn Care Service

Thinking about hiring a lawn or landscape service? In 2003, more than 40 million U.S. households hired professionals to take care of their lawns, according to a Harris Interactive survey released by the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET).

Lawn care companies offer services ranging from fertilizing and pest control to aerating, mowing, and plant health care. Residential property values, the environment, and the community all benefit from healthy, thick lawns.

Experts at PLANET suggest homeowners think quality as well as price when calling in a pro. According to the Harris survey, good references and reputation ranked number one in the selection of a lawn and landscape service.

When selecting a company, consumers should ask for the following items: a detailed listing of services and costs, a written estimate and length of service, a list of references, and evidence that the company meets all state licensing requirements.

It is also important to make sure the company is a member of a professional association and to check the company's service record by calling the local Better Business Bureau. Members of PLANET can be found by using the pro locator service at *LandcareNetwork.org/findaprofessional*. PLANET also offers a rigorous certification program, which includes the designations Landscape Industry Certified Manager and Landscape Industry Certified Technician.