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7:30-8:30 AM: Check-in & Coffee

EDUCATION TRACKS	BUSINESS OPERATIONS	LANDSCAPE OPERATIONS	TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT	IRRIGATION	
Location	Guilford D	Guilford E	Guilford F	Guilford G	
8:30 - 9:20 AM	Differentiating Your Business in a Crowded Field Gage Robert, Ben Mason, Weathermatic  APPROVED	Introduction to Stormwater Management Brad Flack, StormwaterONE  APPROVED	Landscape Weed Control Strategies Dr. Ray McCauley, NCSU  APPROVED	Pipe Dreams: The Art and Science of Pipe Sizing Clark O'Neill, Carolinas Irrigation  APPROVED	
9:30 - 10:20 AM	Elevate Your Career with the NC Certified Plant Professional (CPP) Designation Danny Lauderdale, Cindy Lauderdale, Matt Jones, NCSU  APPROVED	Landscapes That Save the World: The Importance of Biodiversity in the Landscape Bryce Lane, Horticulturist  APPROVED	You Pick the Pests: Turf Insect Edition Dr. Terri Billeisen, NCSU  APPROVED	Gear Up: Essential Equipment and Maintenance for Irrigation Pros Smith Turf  APPROVED	
10:30 - 11:20 AM	Make Your Message Irresistible: Marketing & Management Strategies to Grow Your Landscape Business Rafael Mael, Maelstrom  APPROVED	Efficient Tool Use for Overcoming Future Landscaping Challenges Greg Niewold, Power Planter Inc.  APPROVED	Managing Difficult Turfgrass Diseases in the Landscape Dr. Jim Kerns, NCSU  APPROVED	Juggling Act: Offsite Management for Multi-Site Irrigation Success Greg Goudeau, HydroPoint  APPROVED	
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Lunch, available on a first-come, first-served basis 12:00 - 12:50 PM: Keynote Presentation	Dr. Charlie Hall, Texas A&M University Competing in the Current and Projected Green Industry Economic Landscape With fears of economic stagnation on everyone's mind, it's important to remember that this is not the first time that Americans have taken a hard look at our country and wondered whether our best days were behind us (and it won't be the last time either). In this presentation, Charlie will address the main drivers of our current green industry situation, how our economy has been as resilient as it has, why in spite of increased wages and economic growth consumers still perceive the opposite, and what has to happen for folks to feel like times are good again. Finally, what does all of this mean for the future green industry sales?			 APPROVED	
1:00 - 1:50 PM	Compliant Hiring, Current Trends in Background Screening Kevin von der Lippe, Catapult  APPROVED	Landscape Maintenance and Management in a Brave New World Tom Joyce, Horticulturist  APPROVED	Minimizing Turfgrass Applicators Exposure to Pesticide Lee Butler, NCSU  APPROVED	Enhancing Technical Skills: The Role of Contractors in Irrigation Systems Brad Vice, Carolina Land Consultants  APPROVED	
2:00 - 2:50 PM	Supply-side vs. Demand-side Pricing Dynamics Charlie Hall, Texas A&M University  APPROVED	Covering Ground with Plants: A Low-resource Approach to Landscaping Shannon Currey, Izel Plants  APPROVED	Planning Ahead: Seasonal Control of Cool- and Warm-Season Turfgrass Pests Dr. Ray McCauley, NCSU  APPROVED	Save Water, Save the Day: Innovative Water-Saving Strategies Bobby Jackson, The Toro Company  APPROVED	
3:00 - 3:50 PM	The Intelligent Landscape: How AI is Reshaping the Industry Chelsea Hartshorn, Threadleaf Landscape Design Skyler C. Westergard, LandCare, LLC  APPROVED	Designing and Building Outdoor Learning Environments for Young Children in Communities, Municipalities, and Learning Centers Dr. Nilda Cosco, NCSU Robin Moore, NCSU Julie Sherk, NCSU  APPROVED	Consumer Perceptions of Natural Grass Dr. Casey Reynolds, Turfgrass Producers International  APPROVED	Technical Collaboration: Proactive Planning for Irrigation Success Emmy Garvey, Southern Garden Hamilton Garvey, AGW Site Services  APPROVED	

CEU Opportunities The NCNLA applies for continuing education credits from the following entities:

-  **LC** Landscape Contractor License (NC) — Technical CEU
-  **IC** Irrigation Contractor License (NC) — Technical Irrigation CEU
-  **ISA** International Society of Arboriculture — Certified Arborist
-  **LCB** Landscape Contractor License (NC) — Business CEU
-  **ICB** Irrigation Contractor License (NC) — Business CEU
-  **CPP** Certified Plant Professional
-  **LA** Landscape Architect License (NC)
-  **PA** Pesticide Applicator License (NC)

8:30 - 9:20 AM

Differentiating Your Business in a Crowded Field

Approved: ICB - 1; CPP - 1

Gage Roberts, Ben Mason, Weathermatic

How can you make your landscaping business stand out in a sea of green? This session explores proven strategies to differentiate your company in a competitive market, even when resources and capabilities seem similar. You'll gain practical insights into crafting a unique selling proposition, developing a compelling brand identity, and uncovering untapped opportunities. The session will center around a real-world case study, offering actionable takeaways.

9:30 - 10:20 AM

Elevate Your Career with the NC Certified Plant Professional (CPP) Designation

Approved: LA - 0.83; CPP - 1

Danny Lauderdale, Cyndi Lauderdale, Matt Jones, NCSU

Unlock the benefits of the CPP designation, a green industry-recognized credential that sets you apart. This session will explain the significance of the designation, the importance of ongoing professional development, and the renewal process that keeps you at the forefront of industry advancements. You'll also learn strategies to effectively showcase your CPP credential to clients, boosting your professional reputation and business opportunities. With a growing number of active CPPs in North Carolina, discover how earning or renewing your CPP can elevate your career and solidify your standing in the industry. Business owners will learn the benefits of hiring CPPs or getting employees certified.

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Make Your Message Irresistible: Marketing & Management Strategies to Grow Your Landscape Business

Approved: ICB - 1; CPP - 1

Rafael Mael, Maelstrom

Get ready to discover three essential tools to dramatically improve your business communication, with a powerful impact on managing, marketing, and finding and retaining top talent. Drawing on real-world examples from the landscape, hardscape, and deck/patio industries, the presenter will share actionable tools and specific takeaways to help you make your company stand out to potential employees, use your words to drive and inspire your team, package your ideas in a compelling way, respond effectively to negative online reviews, and create bold and relevant marketing strategies. This session is designed to equip you with the communication skills needed to elevate your business.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Compliant Hiring, Current Trends in Background Screening

Approved: LCB - 1; ICB - 1; CPP - 1

Kevin von der Lippe, Catapult

Employment laws are ever-changing and staying compliant can exhaust even the most experienced HR or business professionals — especially as they juggle hiring in today's tough talent market. While it is important to remember which legislative changes affect you and your business, it is a challenge to ensure compliance upkeep is not your full-time job. This presentation looks at the trends in compliant hiring practices, focusing on background-checking laws, best practices, and current trends so that your organization can shift from strategies to a streamlined process built to onboard your top talent.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Supply-side vs. Demand-side Pricing Dynamics

Approved: LCB - 1; ICB - 1; CPP - 1

Dr. Charlie Hall, Texas A&M University

The pandemic gave all sectors in the green industry a little cover in terms of adjusting prices which had grown glacially for many years. On the supply side, input cost increases necessitated these price increases and during this time, we didn't have to work as hard to generate sales as we had in the past. But now, post-pandemic, we are starting to get a little push back from customers. Is it time to start lowering prices, or...?

3:00 - 3:50 PM

The Intelligent Landscape: How AI is Reshaping the Industry

Approved: LCB - 1; LA - 0.83; ICB - 1; CPP - 1

*Chelsea Hartshorn, Threadleaf Landscape Design**Skyler C. Westergard, LandCare, LLC*

In this session, we'll share valuable insights on AI applications, tools, and methods for landscape businesses. You'll gain practical takeaways and discover specific AI tools to boost efficiency. We'll focus on using AI as a smart business assistant to enhance operations, showing you how to effectively partner with AI for success. Empower yourself by letting AI handle tasks, freeing you to focus on what truly demands human attention and expertise.

8:30 - 9:20 AM

Introduction to Stormwater Management



APPROVED

Approved: LC - 1; LA - 0.83; CPP - 1

Brad Flack, StormwaterONE

Join Brad Flack from StormwaterONE for an insightful session on the fundamentals of stormwater management and permitting for landscape contractors. This session will provide an overview of the critical principles used to control stormwater runoff and minimize pollution from your job site. Attendees will learn about regulatory requirements and best management practices. After this session, you will be equipped with the tools and strategies to implement successful stormwater program.s

9:30 - 10:20 AM

Landscapes That Save the World: The Importance of Biodiversity in the Landscape



APPROVED

Approved: LC - 1; LA - 0.83; CPP - 1

Bryce Lane, Horticulturist

When it comes to landscapes, there is strength in diversity. All too often horticulturists don't spend enough time thinking about how important it is to promote a well-balanced ecosystem in their home landscape. This talk focuses on why it's important to create biodiverse landscapes, and on how we can achieve that goal in our horticultural operations. Topics will include "plant blindness", seed banks, attracting wildlife, building soil, importance of native plants and more!

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Efficient Tool Use for Overcoming Future Landscaping Challenges



APPROVED

Approved: LC - 1; CPP - 1

Greg Niewold, Power Planter Inc.

As the landscape industry faces evolving challenges, from economic shifts to the potential transition from gas to battery-powered tools, maintaining efficiency is key. This session will explore how using the right tools, like Power Planter augers, can help you adapt while ensuring your plantings thrive. We'll cover best practices for digging properly sized holes for bulbs, plants, and trees, and highlight the importance of proper tool maintenance, including cleaning tips to extend the life and efficiency of your equipment. With the right techniques and well-maintained tools, you can face future challenges with confidence, turning uncertainty into an opportunity for growth. Join us for an interactive discussion on equipping your business for the landscape of tomorrow.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Landscape Maintenance and Management in a Brave New World



APPROVED

Approved: LC - 1; CPP - 1

Tom Joyce, Horticulturist

As the environment and industry evolve, it's essential to stay ahead of the changes impacting landscaping and gardening. In this session, we will discuss how to perform your work effectively in a rapidly changing environment influenced by climate change, new regulations, native plant trends and shifting perspectives on landscape function and appearance. Gain insights into how these factors are reshaping plant selection for residential and commercial sites, and explore the functions and benefits of different landscape planting and design approaches to meet today's client demands. This session will equip you with the knowledge needed to adapt and thrive in the ever-changing landscape industry.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Covering Ground with Plants: A Low-resource Approach to Landscaping



APPROVED

Approved: LC - 1; LA - 0.83; CPP - 1

Shannon Currey, Izel Native Plants

Gardens are often designed in ways that require significant resources—water, fertilizer, pesticides, fuel, and labor. Shortages and costs for these resources call for a different approach. Choose plants that minimize these inputs while adding ecological benefits and building resilience. This presentation will focus on using regionally native perennials to create a living mulch that competes with weeds, reduces runoff and erosion, and provides support for wildlife. The goal is to add big benefits while reducing inputs. Learn about the strategies plants use to compete and cover ground, discuss species to look for in the winter landscape for inspiration, and bring low-resource landscaping to your clients and customers.

3:00 - 3:50 PM

Designing and Building Outdoor Learning Environments for Young Children in Communities, Municipalities, and Learning Centers



APPROVED

Approved: LC - 1; LA - 0.83; CPP - 1

Dr. Nilda Cosco, Robin Moore, Julie Sherk, NCSU

Imagine the power of improving children's outdoor environments in HOAs, municipalities, public housing and the more than 5000 licensed child care centers in NC. Improve children's outdoor environments and open new business opportunities with thoughtful design and construction of outdoor learning environments, which will benefit family health, the environment, and your business's bottom line. Learn from faculty experts about this niche market and how you can help transform early childhood.

TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT, Guilford F

Coordinated by the NC Sod Producers Association



8:30 - 9:20 AM

Landscape Weed Control Strategies



Approved: LC - 1; PA - L : 1, N : 1, D : 1, X : 1; CPP - 1

Dr. Ray McCauley, NCSU

Weeds decrease the uniformity, function, and value of landscapes. This seminar will address the identification, biology, and control of common and novel weeds. Pragmatic, integrated weed control strategies will be presented that maximize long-term success.

9:30 - 10:20 AM

You Pick the Pests: Turf Insect Edition



Approved: LC - 1; PA - L : 1, N : 1, D : 1, X : 1; CPP - 1

Dr. Terri Billeisen, NCSU

In You Pick the Pests, participants will be voting on their top insect pests and priority areas. This seminar will address the top selected turfgrass insects and review biology, monitoring and management for each. Particular focus will be given to successful management approaches for cost-effective and environmentally-sound control. We will also review life cycle stages and how they can influence product selection and application timing.

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Managing Difficult Turfgrass Diseases in the Landscape



Approved: LC - 1; PA - L : 1, N : 1, D : 1, X : 1; CPP - 1

Dr. Jim Kerns, NCSU

Diseases in the landscape can be challenging, and this presentation will cover the basics of the most common diseases in warm—and cool-season turfgrass lawns. It will focus on the newest management strategies and incorporate methods that have been successful for quite some time.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Minimizing Turfgrass Applicators Exposure to Pesticide



Approved: LCB - 1; PA - L : 1, N : 1, D : 1, X : 1; CPP - 1

Lee Butler, NCSU

Applicators risk exposure to pesticides during mixing, application, and cleanup. This presentation will address ways applicators can minimize their exposure to pesticides by using correct product formulations, PPE, handling and application practices. Attendees will learn how to correctly and safely handle and apply pesticides while minimizing their risk of exposure.

2:00 – 2:50 PM

Planning Ahead: Seasonal Control of Cool- and Warm-Season Turfgrass Pests



Approved: LC - 1; PA - L : 1, N : 1, D : 1, X : 1; CPP - 1

Dr. Ray McCauley, NCSU

Seasonal pesticide maintenance plans are critical to keep turfgrass pests at bay. This seminar will address the identification, biology, and control of common turfgrass pests in the landscape. Maximizing turfgrass health will be emphasized as will the proper selection and timing of pesticide treatments for maximum effectiveness.

3:00 – 3:50 PM

Consumer Perceptions of Natural Grass



Approved: LC - 1; LA - 0.83; CPP - 1

Dr. Casey Reynolds, Turfgrass Producers International

This session dives into the latest consumer and market research on what influences purchasing decisions for outdoor spaces, with a specific focus on natural grasses. We'll explore which grasses perform best in various regions, what consumers are seeking, and the reasons driving these preferences. Additionally, we'll take a deep dive into various species of natural grasses in the southeast including tall fescue, bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, and others examining their appeal and suitability. The session will also discuss how generational differences impact purchasing practices, shaping preferences for outdoor space enhancements.

IRRIGATION, Guilford G

Coordinated by the Carolinas Irrigation Association



8:30 - 9:20 AM

Pipe Dreams: The Art and Science of Pipe Sizing



Approved: LA - 0.83; IC - 1; CPP - 1

Clark O'Neill, Carolinas Irrigation

Join us as we explore the fundamentals of pipe sizing! This course covers the critical factors influencing pipe selection and system efficiency. Gain practical insights into calculations and best practices to optimize your irrigation systems and minimize water waste.

9:30 - 10:20 AM

Gear Up: Essential Equipment and Maintenance for Irrigation Pros



Approved: LA - 0.83; IC - 1; CPP - 1

Smith Turf

Ensure your irrigation systems run smoothly with this hands-on course on equipment maintenance. Discover best practices for routine checks, troubleshooting common issues, and maximizing the lifespan of your tools. Keep your systems efficient and your clients happy!

10:30 - 11:20 AM

Juggling Act: Offsite Management for Multi-Site Irrigation Success



Approved: LA - 0.83; IC - 1; CPP - 1

Greg Goudeau, HydroPoint

Master the art of managing multiple irrigation sites from afar! This course will equip you with tools and techniques to oversee diverse projects effectively. Learn about scheduling, resource allocation, and leveraging technology for streamlined offsite management.

1:00 - 1:50 PM

Enhancing Technical Skills: The Role of Contractors in Irrigation Systems



Approved: LA - 0.83; IC - 1; CPP - 1

Brad Vice, Carolina Land Consultants

In the irrigation industry, successful implementation of systems requires a deep understanding of technical skills, particularly when working with specialized contractors. This course will focus on the essential irrigation skills needed to effectively manage and collaborate with contractors, ensuring high-quality outcomes in every project.

Participants will gain insights into:

- Core Irrigation Principles: Understanding the fundamentals of irrigation design, installation, and maintenance that every contractor should know.
- Technical Integration: Learning how to communicate essential irrigation concepts to diverse contractors, including pipefitting, troubleshooting, and electrical work.

- Quality Assurance: Developing strategies for maintaining consistent quality across all components of the irrigation system, ensuring compliance with industry standards.

We will explore how to assess contractor capabilities and align their expertise with specific technical requirements of irrigation projects. Emphasis will be placed on fostering a knowledgeable environment where contractors can enhance their skills related to irrigation technologies and practices.

By the end of this course, attendees will be equipped with the technical tools and knowledge necessary to manage contractor contributions effectively, leading to improved project execution and sustainable irrigation solutions. This course qualifies for continuing education credits, reinforcing the importance of technical proficiency in the irrigation field.

2:00 - 2:50 PM

Save Water, Save the Day: Innovative Water-Saving Strategies



Approved: LA - 0.83; IC - 1; CPP - 1

Bobby Jackson, The Toro Company

Water conservation is more crucial than ever! Explore cutting-edge techniques and technologies designed to minimize water usage in irrigation. This course will provide you with actionable strategies to implement in your projects, helping you save resources and enhance sustainability.

3:00 - 3:50 PM

Technical Collaboration: Proactive Planning for Irrigation Success



Approved: LA - 0.83; IC - 1; CPP - 1

Emmy Garvey, Southern Garden

Hamilton Garvey, AGW Site Services

This session brings together experienced project managers and business owners with backgrounds in landscape and irrigation contracting to discuss the technical aspects of managing collaborative projects from concept to completion. Participants will learn how effective communication and coordination can enhance the quality of irrigation systems.

Key topics include:

- Landscape and Irrigation Plan Review: Understanding the technical details necessary for effective design integration.
- Scheduling and Coordination: Techniques for aligning timelines and resources to optimize installation efficiency.
- Installation Best Practices: Ensuring that all team members are skilled in the technical requirements of irrigation systems.
- Walkthroughs and As-Built Documentation: Importance of thorough inspections and accurate records to maintain system integrity.
- Warranty and Maintenance Considerations: Strategies for ensuring long-term performance and reliability of irrigation systems.
- By the end of the session, attendees will gain insights into how proactive planning and technical collaboration can lead to positive results in irrigation projects.