

# ALLAN BLOCK LANDSCAPES

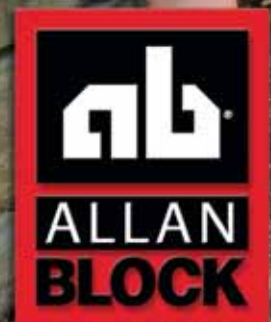
Newsletter for the Landscape Professional

Issue 28



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## Be Kind to the Earth: "Green" Curb Appeal

The first impression for any home is the front yard. To make a lasting impression, any project should be created with the needs of the homeowner in mind. Are there existing elements that need to be used, is space an issue, is there a look, style or color scheme that should be used? By incorporating these items into the design, you will not only have a functional front yard, but one that offers curb appeal as well.



Before



After

When the Sobocinskis were looking to update their front yard, they had a list of items that they wanted to do to make their unmanageable hillside a beautiful entrance to their home. Existing trees and stairs were to be incorporated with additional plants and landscaping to soften the overall look of the home. They wanted a retaining wall that could give them an actual front yard area using natural stone or if natural stone was not in the budget, something that would look natural. To them it was important to use a product that was not harmful to the environment, a "Green" recycled material.



After doing a little research and talking to local contractors, they found that building their retaining wall using a concrete product was the way to go. There were several options from size, color and style to choose from.

During their research they found a new "Green" product that was available from Allan Block - the AB Fieldstone Collection®. This seemed to fit their plans and budget for having the look of natural stone and be an Eco-Friendly product.

Once the product was selected and the design completed, it was time to get to work. The lighter weight two-piece AB Fieldstone units made the installation faster and easier than their original natural stone choice. Building terraced walls in place of one tall wall, allowed new planting areas to help soften the look of the landscape. No special or extra blocks were needed to build corners or curves and by ending the walls with curves into the existing stairways, additional planting areas were created.

AB Fieldstone was such a very user-friendly product that in less than 1 week this home was able to go from an unmanageable hillside with no space, to an impressive front yard that is the envy of the neighborhood.



# Investing in the Outdoors - The Latest

The state of the housing market has made some changes in the way people are looking at their living spaces. Rather than moving, many homeowners are opting to stay in their homes and invest in upgrading their existing living spaces. This trend has pushed to the outdoors as people are staying in more often and entertaining at home has increased the need for more livable outdoor space.

Homeowners want to create a sense of place for their family, friends, and neighbors to enjoy outside. So what are some of the hottest trends in investing in your outdoors?

## Living and Building Green

A lot of emphasis has been put on being green or environmentally friendly recently, as we all look for ways to conserve, replenish and otherwise help the environment we live in. While homeowners are looking for more low-maintenance water friendly plants and landscaping, they are also looking for more ways to improve their spaces while still shrinking the size of their carbon footprint. This is where new “green” products and practices have an opportunity to soar.



Allan Block products have always been made to be good for the environment, using our environmentally safe products to replace millions of feet of treated timber walls, and keeping millions more from ever being installed in the first place. Allan Block has taken this one step further with AB Fieldstone.

AB Fieldstone, a new retaining wall product from Allan Block, is a perfect choice for homeowners who still need a retaining wall structure but want to be more “green”. This two-piece system is made with recycled materials, has a natural stone appearance and is easy to install, making it Green, Natural, and Friendly - that is AB Fieldstone. This revolutionary product is just another way homeowners can reduce their carbon footprint, while still maintaining a beautiful and lasting outdoor living space. Visit [allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com) for more information on the AB Fieldstone Collection.



# in Landscape Trends



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AB Europa®  
Collection



AB Courtyard  
Collection™

## Outdoor Kitchens

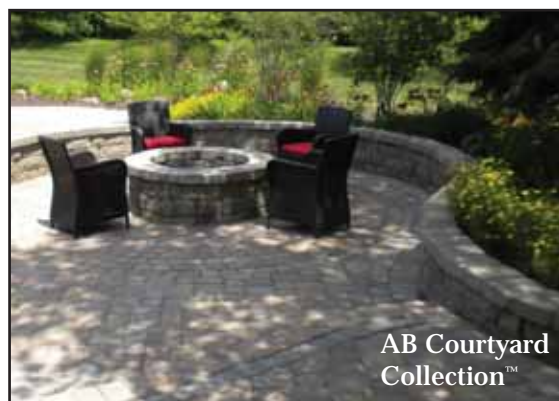
This leads us to the next trend - Outdoor Kitchens are much more than just a barbecue grill and a lawn chair. With the combination of entertaining and gourmet cooking becoming all the rage, it is only natural for the evolution of the outdoor kitchen. Homeowners today are looking for the complete package - kitchens with counters and bars, dining areas, places for not only cooking but entertaining as well.

Using the AB Courtyard Collection products to construct these outdoor eating and entertaining centers keeps the job beautiful and easy to build. Because of the block's unique versatility, each outdoor kitchen can be customized to fit the space and style the homeowner is looking for.

## Seating/Entertaining Areas

As this trend for moving the indoors out continues, there is a need to design these "living rooms without walls" to be just as warm and inviting as the ones found indoors. Incorporating seating walls and enclosures, pergolas, dining and entertaining areas will bring this dream to life.

Elements of fire and water are also high on the list. Integrating fire pits or fire places, waterfalls, fountains and ponds are another way to bring peace and tranquility to the space.



AB Courtyard  
Collection™

## Investing in the Future

While economic times may be leaner than some years past, we are continuing to see a trend in improving our living spaces. With Allan Block products and their wide variety of styles and finishes, investing in the future of your outdoor living space can be beautiful, green and inviting. What is your next outdoor project going to be?

**See [allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com) for more great project photos and ideas for outdoor living.**



# Estimating Your Hardscape Projects Made Simple



## Download Our FREE AB Estimating Tool

The **NEW** AB Estimating Tool has been released and is available to download at [allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com). The free tool has been available for a couple of months and we received nothing but positive feedback.

*"I am using the beta version of your estimating tool and I am quite impressed. I wish all product suppliers would provide this kind of tool."* - Contractor

This is just one of the many e-mails we have received regarding this tool.

Use our estimating tool for all of your Allan Block projects, this tool is easy to install and use - just follow the step-by-step guide to make any of your estimating needs a breeze.

### Here are the Highlights:

- Works on Windows 2000 and later.
- Works on Mac computers.
- Much more powerful than the Excel based tool previously.
- Intuitive screens with pictures.
- Contractor and homeowner estimates.
- Help files are available online.
- Contractors can customize estimates with their company info.
- English and Metric units and multi-language.
- One file can contain many retaining walls, AB Courtyard seating walls, and the AB Fence.

Download this **FREE** and easy to use AB Estimating Tool at [allanblock.com/dlp/Estimating.aspx](http://allanblock.com/dlp/Estimating.aspx) and be sure to read the Help and Installation Instructions.

Happy Estimating!



# ***AB Reinforcement Grid: Allan Block is Teaming Up with Strata Systems***

## **Adding Strength to Your Landscape Retaining Walls Just Got Better**

Allan Block and Strata Systems are teaming up to bring AB Reinforcement Grid to the landscape retaining wall market.

AB Reinforcement Grid is a high strength polyester mesh that is coated with a black protective film. It is used to give added strength to the wall by reinforcing the soil behind it. AB Reinforcement Grid has been specifically designed and packaged to conveniently serve the landscape wall market for Allan Block retaining walls up to 6ft (1.8m) in height.

*"We are excited about this new opportunity to provide Allan Block's AB Reinforcement Grid," said David Butchart, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Strata Systems. "This program allows Strata to provide a one stop shop for a full range of products for segmental walls to Allan Block Producers/Dealers. Many of them are already long time customers of Strata so this just completes the package we can offer."*

For more information on AB Reinforcement Grid, visit our website at [allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com).



[allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com)

Sign up at [allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com) to receive the *Allan Block Landscapes* newsletter by e-mail.

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Australian Pat. #682,394 & #133,306 Germany Pat. # 69,423,563.6 Taiwan Pat. #NI-72269 Japan Pat. #3,142,107  
AB Fieldstone Pat. US - #7,775,747 AB Courtyard Pat. US 6,948,282 Australian Pat. #2003204789 Int'l & other patents pending DOC. #L0327-1010