

ALLAN BLOCK LANDSCAPES

Newsletter for the Landscape Professional

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Raised Patios Bring Views to New Heights

The beauty of this Shippensburg, Pennsylvania home was raised to new heights when homeowners Brad and Dianne Wenger decided it was time to build the new patio they had dreamed of. They wanted a space large enough to entertain,



with lighting and easy access to the lawn and yard below. This was going to be no small task because the vision they had included a raised patio, complete with water features and an outdoor fireplace.

Being in the tile business and understanding the need for proper construction, the Wenger's were up for the challenge. Brent and his father, Kenny got to work on the design using products manufactured by their local company, Nitterhouse Masonry Products, LLC. With some guidance from the people at Nitterhouse and the installation information from Allan Block on retaining wall construction, the Wenger's got to work.

Retaining walls were built first to build up the patio and level out the area. A stairway was added to make easy access to the lower part of the yard and lawn areas. Next, the patio walls were constructed to add not only additional seating areas and decorative posts, but to enclose the patio to add safety and beauty as well. The water feature, a pond in the center of the patio and the focal point of the patio, the large outdoor fireplace were the finishing touches to this outdoor wonderland.

Most homeowners might not want to take on a project of this size, instead opting for the help of a Certified Contractor, but the Wenger's were ready willing and able to take on the task. While this project took them some time to build on their own, it was well worth the effort. Now they can sit back and enjoy the view from their new raised patio, basking in the warmth of the fire, listening to the sounds of the pond with their family and friends.



Contractors: Reap the Benefits of Training

Stand Out Within Your Competition

In the landscape/hardscape industry, the work and services that you show to your customers becomes your living resume; a snapshot into the quality and beauty of the finished product you can provide. Client's yards become show pieces to their friends and neighbors and the influx of new potential customers. So what does it take to make you stand out above the competition?

Well, the first thing is having a product that you know is better than your competitors... Otherwise, you'll always be wondering whether, or not, your products or services are the best option for the customer. Selling something you don't really believe in, is a prescription for disaster. Think of these three things as the core of a successful business - knowledge, service and pricing. If you have the first two, you don't need to be at the front of the price race to the bottom dollar. Building a successful long term business is about the value of knowledge and trust you provide your customers, and the quality of the services that you give them.

Have the Knowledge

Training is the cornerstone of any successful business, saving you time, money and allowing you to build your business in a way that will reward you for years to come. By making sure you and your staff have the proper training allows you to not only build better retaining walls and outdoor landscapes, but provides you with the tools you need to convey your knowledge to your customer, building confidence and trust between you and the client.

While there are a wide variety of training opportunities available in the marketplace, the following allow contractors to gain knowledge and better service their customers:

Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute (ICPI)

The Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute (ICPI), founded in 1993, is the national trade association representing the interlocking concrete paving industry. ICPI is a leader in the development of technical information for design professionals and contractors. Their mission is to increase the application of segmental concrete pavement systems in North America. To do this, the ICPI has a program to certify contractors for concrete paving and installation. This certification lasts two years and contractors are required to take continuing education classes to maintain their certification. Information on this certification can be found at icpi.org.



Attend one of our our hand-ons and class room trainings.



Be confident in the projects you build.





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Allan Block Certified Contractor Program



The Allan Block Contractor Certification Program, developed in 1995, was created to give contractors the proper training and tools to ensure top quality segmental retaining walls are built. As a leader in the industry, Allan Block Corporation has developed these tools and training programs to help contractors get the knowledge and the resources they need. The courses include in-depth materials on proper construction methods for retaining walls as well as hands on training to really allow the contractor to get a feel for how the products work and are taught by certified Allan Block trainers.

Now certified by the ICPI as an approved class for continuing education, contractors can enhance their knowledge of paving stones with the knowledge of retaining walls – making them more knowledgeable and valuable in the marketplace. Classes are held locally so that you can easily find training near you. Check for a currently listing of upcoming classes at allanblock.com/training and signup online.

Get the Skills

With the knowledge and training in your background, you now have the tools to build your skills and fine tune your craft. On the job work and the practical application of the training you have received gives you the tools to tackle any jobsite and any project challenge with the confidence that sets you, the contractor, out above the rest. The customer has the peace of mind in knowing that you have all the training and skills needed to do the job right.

Provide the Service

In this day and age where customer service seems to be a lost art, you can set yourself apart from the competition, by providing something no other company does – excellent customer service. When a customer is satisfied with your knowledge, skills and presentation, you have a client for life. And having a client means both parties win. As a result, the customer is completely satisfied with both the service and the product which in turn leads to referrals and repeat sales. The best advertising you can do is to have a happy customer.

Now Keep the Momentum Going...

Don't be afraid to ask for testimonials and referrals. A satisfied customer will be more than happy to post something on your website or social media page. With each successful project and happy customer you can build your business by spreading the word and keep the momentum going.

Go to - allanblock.com/training and signup online.

Training Scheduled in the United States

FLORIDA - Deerfield Beach
December 12, 2012 - AB Contractor Certification Training
Location: Titan America's 3rd Fl Training Room, at 455 Fairway Drive, Deerfield Beach, FL 33441
Sign-in begins at 8:00 am. Class begins at 8:30 am - 3:30 pm.
Register By: December 10, 2012
Please contact Greg Strickland with any questions regarding this class.
Phone Number: 561-291-3459
E-Mail: gstrickland@titanamerica.com

Class Size: Open Full Full [Click Here to Reserve Your Seat](#)



Have a question? Ask a Retaining Wall Expert! Visit allanblock.com - it has all the answers or check out our blog - allanblockblog.com.

Featured Application - Window Wells

Adding Light to the Depths

No matter the size or style of your home, if there is a window on your house that is below grade – then you need a window well. Window wells offer more natural light into a dark basement and allow for quick escape for inhabitants if needed. They keep soil away from foundation windows and can even block or divert water that may be present.

While simple in concept, window well construction can be very serious business. Proper drainage and construction methods will ensure to make your window well a problem solver – not a problem maker. If yours is like most houses, the window well is at its root - a hard to clean hole that fills with snow, leaves and water. But there is hope, with the right design; your window well can be a thing of beauty.

There are three basic things that will help determine your options for window well design:

- What is its function?
- What are the site conditions?
- Where does the water go?



Window Type: Basic or Egress

A basic window well consists of a curved shape that is relatively shallow and is used to allow light and ventilation in to a window in the foundation.

An egress window is usually part of a living or bedroom area and will not only allow light and fresh air in, but be large enough to allow occupants to escape should there be a fire or other disaster. An egress window may have additional building requirements based on your local building codes and should be verified before you start to build.

Site Conditions: Where is it Located?

In addition to the type of window you have, where the window is located on the house and the layout of the existing landscape, will also determine what construction methods are needed. The deeper the set of the window the more planning will need to be done prior to construction.

Where Does the Water Go?

While its name is a tip-off to the potential issues that can arise, proper planning and construction can avert a possible disaster. The last thing you want next to your foundation is water collecting in the well. Diverting water away from the foundation with drains, drainage rock and drainage pipes can help you avoid such a disaster.

The Allan Block Solution

Instead of using the standard galvanized steel window well frame or treated timbers that will rot over time, try building the window well with Allan Block retaining wall blocks.

- The blocks provide a beautiful texture to enhance the view from the window.
- The wall rock installed below and behind the blocks allows water to drain freely away from the window itself.
- If the well is deep, terraces can be created to provide easy access to the area and bring in more natural light.



Contractors: Don't Be Left Behind!

Become an AB Certified Contractor and Reap the Rewards!

- **Get More Referrals**
- **Have More Skills - Work Smarter and Faster**
- **Make More Money**

**Find a class near you and enroll today
at allanblock.com or contact your
local sales rep for more details!**



Allan Block has loads of resources. Check it out and find what you need.

- Our #1 Resource - The Allan Block Website has everything you need to plan, design, and build with Allan Block products. The web never sleeps – so our website is available anytime anywhere.
- Allan Block Blog - ask a question get an answer from the experts.
- The Allan Block App for Apple and Android.
- eBooks for tablets and phones with our complete installation guides.
- Training programs for contractors, engineers, dealers.
- And much more....

Ask your local rep for how Allan Block can provide a solution for your landscape.



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