

Decks Practical
People like wood patio decks because they're practical. A deck doesn't hold puddles or heat. Upkeep consists of hosing it down occasionally, and there is no sun glare from weathered Douglas fir deck boards.



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Observer GARDEN PAGE

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Use Plants to Help Cut Down Glares of Headlights

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Highway plantings to screen headlights glare of oncoming cars and to serve as traffic guides and noise abatement buffers, generally have proved effective, according to reports from twelve state highway departments.

In Maryland, in addition to reduction or elimination of headlight glare, monoculture of driving has been relieved by dense straight row plantings. Minor deciduous and evergreen trees have reduced driver tensions. In New Jersey some headlight glare plantings were found to be effective as snow fences.

Proper plant selections are the key to successful median plantings. Use of large amounts of salt for snow and ice removal damage plants too near traffic lanes, in narrow medians.

In Maine, on wide medians colorful combinations of plants, such as dogwood and weeping willow have been used effectively.

Damage to plants too close to median results from cars swerving into the median.

In narrow medians, plantings should be carefully considered by the designer to determine if the benefits justify the cost.



STATE LANDSCAPE award is received by Harold Thomas (right), of Harold Thomas Nursery in Livonia, for the most outstanding landscape design and construction of a residential plant-

ing. It was the work of Thomas in landscaping the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Meinzing, 34615 W. Six Mile Road, that won the award. The Meinzingers also received a plaque.

Fence's Life, Looks Depend on Construction, Materials

Why do some fences look handsome, while others seem shabby? Construction and materials are 90 per cent of the story. If built properly and of long-lasting western lumber, a fence, regardless of style, will look well, and will continue to look trim and attractive over the years.

Post alignment is one of the most important steps in construction. Posts must be plumb, precisely aligned and firmly set for a good looking, straight fence. To set posts, a tamping bar, hammer, 16d nails, carpenter's level and twine are needed.

Start at a corner and fix the corner post as follows: shovel three inches of gravel into the post hole and tamp firmly. Place post on top of gravel.

Then shovel in six inches of gravel so that the post rests on a gravel base and has a gravel collar extending six inches from the bottom. Tamp gravel firmly in place so that the post stands upright.

Be sure the post is plumb by checking with a carpenter's level against two sides. Brace the post with boards nailed from stakes to the post to keep it plumb. Then fill the hole with concrete for greatest rigidity. Gravel and soil may also be used for fill, depending on soil structure and drainage.

In an area where freezing is severe, cracking of concrete can be avoided with an expansion joint made by wrapping the post in corrugated cardboard, smooth side out, then pouring concrete. When the concrete is cured, remove the cardboard and fill the space with melted roofing tar.

Now set the next corner post securely, but not permanently. Then stretch twine tightly between the permanently set corner post and the opposite, temporarily set corner post and use the twine as a guide in setting intermediate line posts.

Line posts should be set permanently. The far corner post can then be adjusted, if necessary, to obtain perfect alignment. Set it permanently, then work to the next corner in the same manner.

Only woods with a good record of outdoor performance should be used for fencing, and

the western species such as western red cedar and Douglas fir are always recommended. It's also wise to use treated lumber for posts, but other parts of the fence do not require treated wood.

Fir and cedar can be stained, allowed to weather, or they can be painted if desired, and will hold paint well.

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