

2019 Sustainability Report



Association of
Professional
Landscape
Designers

Sustainability Report

The Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD) Sustainability Committee conducted a survey to assess members' interests in sustainable practices as well as end-user interest in requesting sustainable elements for their projects. This survey, distributed in March 2019, built upon the original sustainability survey conducted by APLD in 2016. The results were interesting and we hope to continue bringing the concept of sustainability to our members, their clients, and the public-at-large. Following are the results of this survey and the comparison to the 2016 results.



When asked if clients are asking for specific elements to be incorporated into their designs that pertain to sustainability, we saw an increase in the number of designers responses in the affirmative:

	2016	2019
Yes	67.80%	81.58%
No	32.2%	18.42%

While more clients appear to be asking for sustainable elements, the number of respondents who proactively discuss sustainable practices and ideas with clients did not change significantly over the past three years.

	2016	2019
Yes	92.7%	94%
No	7.3%	5.3%

Likewise, when asked for the percentage of designs that included specific elements pertaining to sustainability over the previous 12-month period, not much significant change was seen over the past three years. Of small note is a drop in those indicating a 26-50% range and an increase in the 76-100% range.

	2016	2019
0-15%	4%	4%
16-25%	8%	8%
26-50%	19%	9%
51-75%	16%	18%
76-100%	53%	61%

When asked which plant and soil elements are used in designs, the responses received did not indicate a large change over the past three years, except in the area of compost/organic mulch where there was an increase of 12%.

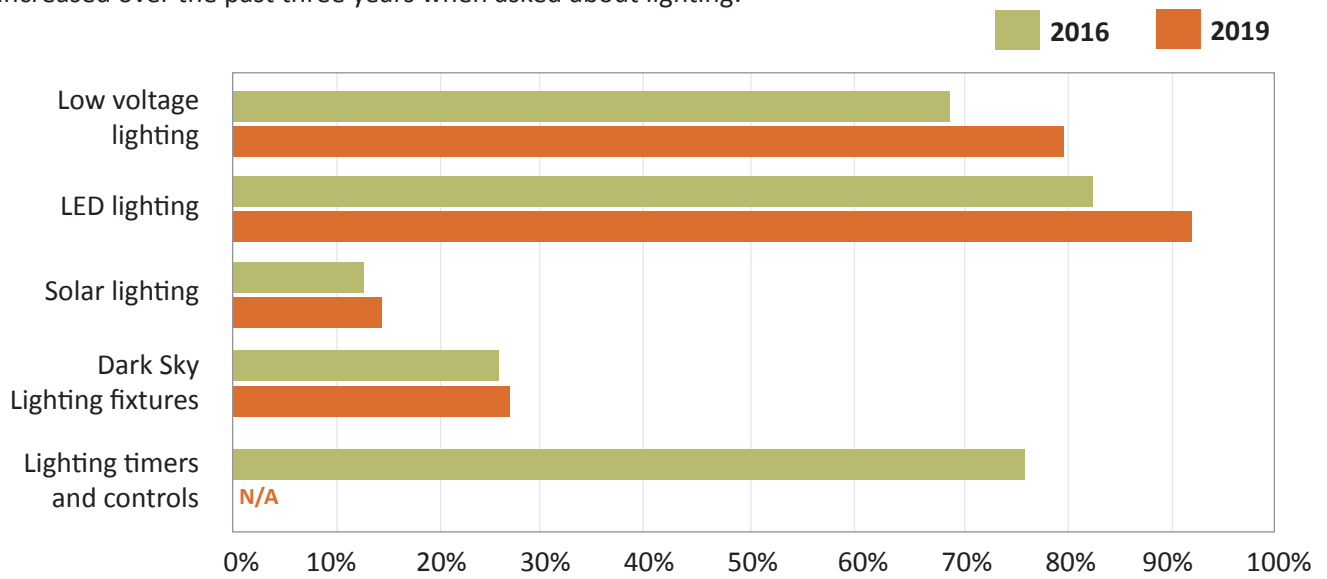
	2016	2019
Native plants	94%	92.76%
Drought-tolerant plants	96.4%	87.50%
Bird and pollinator habitat	85.5%	88.16%
Invasive weed management	53%	48.03%
Sustainably grown plants	36.1%	26.97%
Edible landscaping	66.9%	64.47%
Alternative turfgrass/sedge lawns	58.4%	63.16%
Compost, organic mulch	72.3%	84.21%
Compost teas	12%	15.79%
Mycorrhiza inoculations	28.3%	32.89%

Note: In the 2019 survey, respondents were asked this question related to permaculture (24.1%) and conservation landscaping (42.4%). There is no comparative data to share.

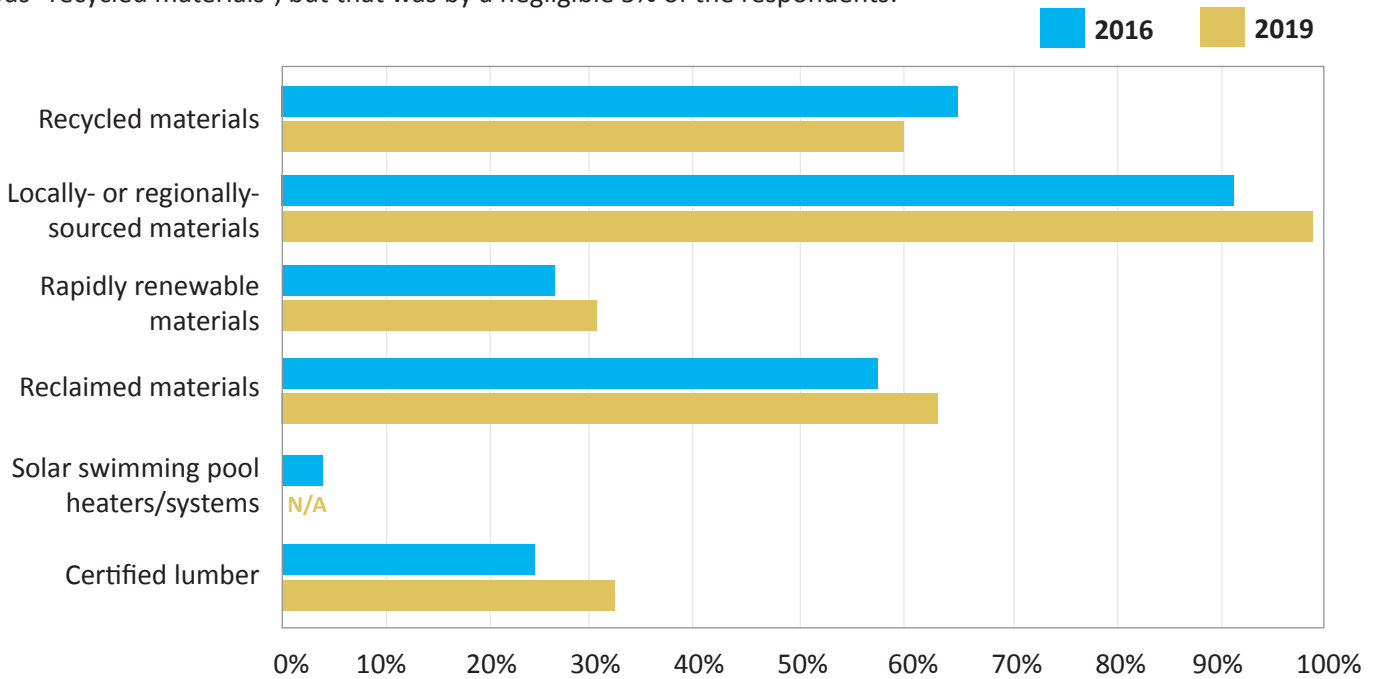
When asked which of the following irrigation and stormwater management elements are used in designs, the responses were fairly consistent, as follows:

	2016	2019
Trickle/drip irrigation	86.1%	83.44%
Temporary/establishment irrigation only	49.7%	41.72%
"Smart" irrigation controllers	57.0%	67.55%
Rain sensors	55.8%	60.26%
Soil moisture sensors	12.1%	14.57%
Cisterns for rainwater or graywater	27.9%	42.38%
Use of graywater	42.4%	13.91%
Rain gardens or vegetated swales	64.2%	71.52%
Green roofs or green walls	12.7%	11.26%
Permeable hardscapes	81.2%	80.13%
Commitment to no irrigation	20.6%	n/a
Dry well/infiltration techniques	n/a	53.64%

It was interesting to note that the idea of using low voltage and LED lighting both increased over the past three years when asked about lighting:



We also saw an increase in the number of respondents using more sustainable materials in their designs. The only item that decreased over the past three years was “recycled materials”, but that was by a negligible 5% of the respondents:



Conclusion:

Based upon the results of the sustainability survey from 2016 and comparing it to the 2019 results, it appears that more designers and consumers are recognizing sustainable practices and incorporating them into their projects. APLD supports sustainable practices and encourages all its members and others involved in design and/or installation to continue practicing sustainability.

More information can be obtained about the survey and results by contacting APLD headquarters via email to info@apl.org.