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### **(PROPERTY MANAGEMENT) Contracted Help Saves Active Adult Site Six Figures**

A company managing an active adult community in California has found a way to save the ownership group in the six-figure range with its green landscaping concepts and has provided one more weapon in its marketing arsenal.

The Laguna Woods Village 50+ community reveals the green-based maintenance practices of Professional Community Management Inc and its Landscape & Recreation Director Kurt Rahn is saving them about \$250,000 annually. Specifically, Rahn's implementation of a sustainability-driven compost system at the property reduced waste at Laguna Woods Village by 70%.

The system calls for most landscaping waste to be staged in an unused area where it is composted and re-used as mulch at the property. The point is: diverting nearly 500 tons of waste per year saves money over traditional waste disposal on labor to haul the waste, dump fees and on the purchase of mulch needed for the property, Rahn tells *HSR*. And he believes just about any community with a large amount of unused, open space (Laguna Woods Village totals 2,100 acres) could do this.

"It's not rocket science, but there's going to be a learning curve you need to get over," Rahn tells us. "Still, anyone who got themselves educated could quickly figure out how to do this effectively and properly."

For communities without large amounts of space needed for composting, Rahn suggests easier green measures such as purchasing lawnmowers designed to finely chop nutrient rich clippings so they don't have to be picked up -- to save on pesticide use/cost -- and installing more efficient irrigation systems to ensure consistent savings on property maintenance costs.

While conceding that sustainability driven methods aren't for everyone, Rahn says property operators need to do a thorough cost-benefit analysis. Part of that analysis has to be focused on the marketing value of having a green community, he says. Rahn tells us this will play big especially in active adult community because of high interest among baby boomers in green features.

"It is used in our marketing efforts, and it's been great," Rahn says. "People aren't going to me here just because we compost, but it's one of the innovative things the community does. That's another little nugget that can be used so we can market ourselves as environmentally sensitive." -  
*-Brian Shappell*

**Info:** Rahn, 949/597-4652