

**Premium content from Charlotte Business Journal - by Will Boye**

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## **FINALISTS — GENERAL EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP: BUSINESS**

### **J. MARK SMITH**

#### **Environmental Design Landscape Inc.**

J. Mark Smith has long been known as a supporter of sustainability. That's one reason why Duke Energy Corp. chose his Environmental Design Landscape to oversee its vegetation-management program.

Other EDL clients include Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation and the Charlotte Housing Authority. Smith has taken decisive actions to drive environmental sustainability throughout his industry and beyond, into the asset-management industry.

The nomination submitted for Smith and EDL states: "Smith is a proactive advocate for environmental sustainability, very often sharing ideas with different people in the industry and offering guidance so others can achieve greater sustainability in their processes and practices."

Those talks eventually gelled into a management philosophy and into Smith's first book, *Design With the End In Mind*. The book, published this year, is a guide to business practices that bring about sustainability by eliminating waste and extending asset life through proper planning.

Smith also has helped reinvent a nonprofit group, the Carolina Green Industry Network, which he serves as president. The group promotes professionalism, environmental sustainability and collaboration among landscapers.