

Consider It Done



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Property Solutions Group takes concierge services to a new level on Longboat Key



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Most landscaped properties on the Florida Gulf Coast have St. Augustinegrass but PSG also uses improved cultivars of zoysiagrass on residential sites under its care.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PROPERTY SOLUTIONS GROUP.

On the western shores of Florida, bordering the Gulf of Mexico, in exotic sounding places like Longboat Key, Lido Key and Anna Maria Island lays the heart of operations for Property Solutions Group (PSG) and their CEO, Michael Drake.

PSG offers a variety of landscape services including lawn maintenance, irrigation services, lighting and design/build, as well as a full range of services within the home inspection and home repair division, for both their year-round residents and vacation homes. Drake explains, "Our business now consists of managing single-family estates and condominiums for the individual clients. We handle everything for the homeowners from landscape, swimming pools, ponds, home improvements to major home and landscape renovations."

Property Solutions Group

CEO: Michael Drake

Founded: 1998

Headquarters: Longboat Key, Fla.

Markets: Sarasota, Manatee and the barrier islands of Longboat Key, Lido Key

and Anna Maria, Fla.

Services: Lawn Maintenance, design & build, irrigation, pest management, tree pruning and removal, outdoor lighting, landscape renovation and redesign

Employees: 40 full time

Website: <http://propertymanagerpsg.com>

PSG has an exclusive clientele and, with a full-time crew of 40 employees and several seasonal employees, performs weekly lawn services and related additional duties. Drake reports, "We do the landscape maintenance, including all pest management, irrigation systems, fertilization and weekly maintenance. We do not share our client's names due to the high-profile clients that they are."

Most turfgrass in the Gulf area is St. Augustine, which is native to the Gulf Coast. It's cut to about 3 inches every week during the growing season. St. Augustine is susceptible to chinch bugs, but they can be controlled with proper pesticide applications. PSG technicians limit pesticide use on the properties they manage.

"We use them, but we try to only spot-treat and not blanket the entire property. On case-by-case scenarios we have used chemical-free treatments. Same with fertilizers, we use a time-release prill that has a very low leech factor. Maintaining the proper soil conditions and supplying the proper amount of nutrients to the plant material is always the difference between great-looking properties versus a not-so-good-looking property," Drake explains.

The company has also established Celebration bermudagrass and improved cultivars of zoysiagrass on some prominent estates. "These were high-end installs, but they look wonderful," adds Drake. Zoysia can be expensive to install because it is very labor-intensive, obtaining best results by stolon or plug implants. Celebration, a bermuda hybrid, is also popular in the South, offering a relatively quick cover and, unlike zoysia, is tolerant to shade. Both grasses rely on moderate watering, mowing, dethatching and maintenance making them attractive in tropical climates.

PSG utilizes several different models of Toro mowers including the TimeCutter, Z Master and Grandstand mowers each with 52-inch or 40-inch decks. The company still finds uses for an older Batwing unit on larger estates and is committed to using Stihl trimmers, edgers and chain saws.

Sustainability is a prominent feature of the PSG landscape functions, and the company offers the latest technologies with water smart irrigation systems and featuring sustainable plant varieties. "We try to keep our clients from utilizing non-indigenous materials, and promote the proper plant in the proper placement of the yard to all our clients. We have a great success rate, due to our ability to convince clients that we are doing the right thing, horticultural speaking," Drake says.



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Property Solutions Group installs and maintains water smart irrigation systems on many of the properties under its care. Water is precious in Florida in spite of receiving an average of 50 inches of rain annually.

Clean machines

Unique to their operations is a commitment to completely disinfect all equipment between jobs. Drake continues, "We take pride in the fact that we won't take a problem from one site to another. I doubt that any other maintenance company offers this surety to their clients."

In addition to the weekly ground management portfolio, PSG offers design and build services, also with an eye toward sustainability. "With today's focus on sustainability and native, butterfly or even edible gardens, it is a great time for clients to reevaluate their outdoor areas and reconsider a more natural approach to home or condo's landscape planning. Even small design changes can help increase home value, reduce maintenance costs and protect the environment. It also reflects the natural beauty of Florida and improves the property's aesthetics and value. We can transform a backyard into an enviable habitat for birds and butterflies, create inviting garden paths and install ponds, pools, rock sculptures and lighting," Drake explains.

Drake informs that each property PSG manages is unique and provided with specific services. "All of our properties represent the variety of services that we offer. Servicing the individuals' needs allows us to provide tailored specifications for each one of our clients."



Whatever it takes

PSG services comprise a seemingly unlimited range of options, including their concierge service. Drake reports, "Our customized concierge services are tailored to individual needs and include stocking a clients' pantry with favorite foods and beverages, coordinating dinner reservations, tee times, theater and sports tickets, automobile delivery and repair, vendor coordination, special event planning, arranging travel or running never-ending errands. 'Consider it done,' is our motto." Lawn maintenance is the most common service, however PSG also offers; tree services, trimming and felling; landscape renovation and redesign; hardscape installation, including walkways, pavers and rock gardens; outdoor lighting; pest control; and installation of pools, ponds and waterfalls.

A Michigan native, Drake relocated to the Sarasota area in 1982 and soon began working for ARVIDA, Corp., a large resort and real estate development company. A few years later he began working as a property manager and in 1998 founded PSG.

A certified manager of community associations, Drake began PSG servicing large homeowner associations, and his group has managed some of the most prestigious communities on the Gulf Coast including Regent Place, The Sanctuary, Orange Blossom Tower, Golden Gate Point, Conrad Beach on Longboat

Key and Sarabande Condominiums. However, the company found a stronger niche in the personalized attention services they can offer the many individual estates dotting the Gulf coastline.

Away from the pressures of managing exclusive private estates, Drake finds community involvement to be a key element in his personal life. He has served as president of the Longboat Key-Longbeach Village Association, and has been instrumental in the development of the Longbeach Village beautification plan and regularly coordinates landscape improvement projects. He is also an active volunteer with Sarasota Manatee Area Riding Therapy (SMART) and is an active participant, and founding member in the SMART Chefs fundraising program. In addition, Drake served as a Big Brother under the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Suncoast program.

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