



Client Profile /

MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE ARBORETUM



Minnesota Landscape

ARBORETUM

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, located in the Minneapolis suburb of Chanhassen, Minn., features 1,100-plus acres of beautiful public gardens designed to inspire ideas for visitors' own backyards. With 32 display and specialty gardens, 48 plant collections and more than 5,000 plant species, the Arboretum has become one of the premier horticultural field laboratories and public display areas in the country.

The Arboretum, which receives about 330,000 visitors annually, describes itself as a "...kinetic wellspring of education, research and inspiration." Visitors are encouraged to take tours, to tap the brains of leading Arboretum experts/tour guides to discover what plants are flourishing and which creatures are coming and going throughout the Arboretum. The

educational opportunities provided by the staff are numerous and multifaceted – from public walking tours to winter bus tours to May-through-October narrated open-tram tours.

To further its educational mission, the Arboretum staff decided this summer to incorporate Williams Sound Digi-Wave™ digital tour guide technology to its daily walking tours and Arboretum "Trumpet

Creeper" tram tours. The purpose is twofold – to enhance the quality of communication to all tour participants, as well as provide hearing assistance specifically to those visitors who have difficulty hearing.

Four times a day, seven days a week, the Trumpet Creeper carries up to 42 people and offers a 45-minute narrated tour of the grounds. *(Continued on next page)*





The Digi-Wave technology used on the tram includes a DLT 100 digital transceiver and headset microphone worn by the tour guide/driver, and an additional DLT 100 mounted to the ceiling of the front tram car. This second DLT 100 is hardwired to the tram's multiple mounted speakers – a set-up that gives the tour guide the flexibility to move on/off/about the tram and still provide high-quality communication to all tour participants. For individuals who have difficulty hearing and/or wear hearing aids, the Arboretum staff provides DLR 50 receivers and headphones/neckloops to enhance each individual's listening experience.

On the Arboretum's many walking tours, guides use a similar but more portable system to communicate with hard-of-hearing participants. The guide speaks to the tour group, using a DLT 100 (worn on a lanyard) and headset microphone.

Those in the group who have difficulty hearing wear DLR 50 receivers and headphones/neckloops.

Sandy Tanck, Manager of Interpretation and Public Programs, emphasizes, "Our goal at the Landscape Arboretum is to create active ways for people to explore the vital links between themselves,

plants and the earth. This new Digi-Wave communication technology from Williams Sound has helped us greatly enhance the quality of the tour/educational experience here. Every participant can hear the message now. Everyone can learn. Everyone can be inspired."

