


SAN DIEGO COUNTY
DIGEST

The owner of an Escondido landscaping company was ordered Monday to perform 200 hours of community service work for the City of Escondido as part of a sentence imposed for submitting false wage certificates to the U.S. government. Robert Henking Smith's firm, Irris-Cape Construction, was fined \$10,000 by U.S. District Court Judge William Enright. Smith, the firm, and its vice president, Lance Scott, 45, all pleaded guilty to submitting false declarations to the Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding employees' wages. Smith, 29, was placed on five years' probation. Scott will be sentenced Oct. 1. Smith and Scott wrote on wage certificates that their employees were paid \$18.75 an hour, the rate required if the work is for a federally subsidized project. Many

employees actually received \$5 an hour and no overtime. Smith's attorney, Dan Zeidman, stressed that the employees knew all that before they were hired. In an agreement with prosecutors, Smith agreed to pay \$43,000 in back wages to the workers. Smith also is a co-owner of R.H.S. Plant Growers of Escondido, a wholesale nursery business.