

## Metro briefs

### Landscape firm fined

An Escondido landscaping firm has been fined \$10,000 and its president placed on five years probation for submitting false wage certifications on a government-backed, low-cost housing project in San Diego.

U.S. District Judge William B. Enright yesterday ordered Robert Henking Smith, 29, president of the Irri-Scape Construction Inc., to do 200 hours of community service for the city of Escondido.

An indictment returned in April accused the firm, Smith and a company foreman, Karl Lance Scott, of underpaying their employees between \$50,000 and \$70,000 for work on the 500-apartment Marina Cove project at West Point Loma and Nimitz boulevards. Smith and the company pleaded guilty.

Irri-Scape, a subcontractor on the \$18 million housing project, was assigned to install landscaping and an irrigation system under a \$500,000 contract. Because the government guaranteed the construction loan, all subcontractors were required to pay prevailing wages for specific crafts. Prosecutors said the company failed to pay prevailing wages and submitted false payroll certifications to the government.