

Tree Expert and Tree Care Operators Licensing Act

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is this a new licensing program?

A. Not exactly. The current legislation updates an existing certification program originally passed in 1940 overseen by the NJ Board of Tree Experts in the Department of Environmental Protection.

Q. Why was this legislation proposed?

A. There has been a substantial increase in the number of fatalities in the industry, unresolved consumer complaints and poor workmanship over the past ten years.

Q. Does my business have to be licensed?

A. No, only individuals are licensed under the proposed legislation but any business that engages in tree care services within the State must register with the Board.

Q. Does everyone who works on trees have to be licensed?

A. No, only one person in each tree care company has to hold a license.

Q. How do you get a license?

A. Licenses are obtainable in several ways. A license can be issued to; an individual who provides documentation that he/she has been engaged in the tree care industry for the seven years preceding the effective date of the legislation, an individual who holds a substantially equivalent certification from another jurisdiction or an individual who receives a passing grade on a licensing examination administered by the Board.

Q. The tree care industry is very varied and I only do tree removal and stump grinding. What kind of knowledge will the examination test?

A. The legislation actually proposes two types of licenses, one that's for standard tree care work like pruning, removals and stump grinding and one that's for more specialized work and knowledge such as tree risk assessment, tree appraisals and consultations.

Q. Why two types of licenses? Why not just one?

A. Two types of licenses does not burden those individuals who want to continue to do standard tree care work by mandating that they become knowledgeable in other areas in which they do not provide services. Consequently, those who wish to do specialized tree care work or those who have already demonstrated their knowledge through the existing certification program can be recognized as competent in those areas. Two types of licenses is the fairest way to differentiate between the two disciplines.

Q. What do I have to do to maintain my license?

A. Similar to other licensing programs in the State, tree license holders must pay a renewal fee every two years and obtain continuing education units that pertain to arboriculture and tree care operations.

Q. Does a registered business have any other obligation besides registering with the State?

A. Registered businesses will have to abide by adopted industry standards and provide safety training to their employees on a regular basis.