



New Jersey Board of Tree Experts
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News Release

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NEW JERSEY BOARD OF TREE EXPERTS PROPOSES RULE TO ADOPT TO EFFECTUATE THE TREE EXPERTS AND TREE CARE OPERATORS LICENSING ACT

Rule adoption would permit full implementation of the Act to reduce the number of fatalities and injuries in the tree care profession, while providing consumer protection against unscrupulous tree cutters and provide for proper tree care practices to be followed

Jackson - The Tree Experts and Tree Care Operators Licensing Act was passed on January 16, 2010 to address the serious injuries and fatalities in the arboricultural industry, an increase in unresolved local consumer affairs complaints against tree care companies arising from dishonest, “fly-by-night” tree care operations, and the continuation of poor arboricultural practices that put tree owners and their properties at risk.

The New Jersey Department of Health’s Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program statistics show there were ninety fatalities between 1991 and 2014 in the New Jersey tree care industry. Additionally, between 2009 and 2013 there were approximately 270 reported non-fatal injuries in New Jersey to tree care workers and many more that go unreported. Six workers died during or in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. Three of the six were tree care company employees. These injuries and fatalities are due to improper work procedures, and non-compliance with approved safety standards and applicable OSHA safety regulations. Additionally, since the passage of the Act in 2010, and with the frequent

occurrence of devastating storms across the State, consumer complaints on tree care services have risen sharply. By adherence and compliance to approved industry standards and safety requirements as required by the rule, tree care complaints, injuries and fatalities should be reduced.

The rule proposal by the New Jersey Board of Tree Experts, which appears in today's New Jersey Register, will provide full implementation of the Act to address the expectations and concerns of the public and the State regarding proper tree care and workforce safety in the tree care industry. The proposal rule will be open to public comment for a 60-day period.

The rule is consistent with the Act and will guide the Board of Tree Experts to successfully implement the statutory purpose of the Tree Experts and Tree Care Operators Licensing Act. The rule proposal will provide a more comprehensive program to ensure safety and responsibility in the tree care industry. The rule will inform citizens involved in tree care how to become compliant with the requirements of the Act. The Act requires all tree care businesses in the State of New Jersey to register with the Board, provide specified safety training to its employees, maintain appropriate insurance, and abide by standards of professional conduct and ethics. Each registered business is required to have at least one licensee employed at each business location. The Act also creates a licensing program under which individuals may become licensed as Tree Experts or Tree Care Operators by passing an examination and demonstrating good moral character. Licensees will be required to complete continuing education requirements, abide by standards of professional conduct and ethics, and adhere to safety standards as well as industry practice standards.

The Board of Tree Experts will maintain an on-line directory of Tree Experts, Tree Care Operators and Tree Care Businesses, giving the public and the consumer greater confidence in selecting qualified and professional individuals and companies for their tree care needs.

To view or download a copy of the rule proposal, visit the Board's website at: njtreeexperts.org

Comments will be accepted for 60 days following publication in the New Jersey Register and may be submitted to the Board's email at njtreeexperts@gmail.com. Written comments may be mailed to the Board's office at: 101 West Veterans Highway, Jackson, NJ 08527.

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