



Credentials are Important

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BULLETIN

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One would not go to a doctor or dentist who is not professionally certified. And who wants to fly in a commercial plane with a pilot who is not certified? In this modern age of increasing complexity, proof is necessary when we put our trust in the hands of those who we expect to be competent. It is now time to include the various practitioners of urban forestry in this category of professionalism.

With no pun intended, it can be said that urban forestry is a growing field. Not only do we plant and grow trees in our increasingly urbanized nation, we are also charged with keeping vegetation healthy and safe. In fact, the burdens of responsibility placed on every employee and volunteer associated with urban forestry are growing every year as society becomes more safety-conscious and — when things go wrong — litigious.

Certification and accreditation programs are one way to help prevent problems. The words stem from the Latin

Certification is now available at virtually every level and in most subfields of urban forestry and tree care. Better service to the public is one of the many reasons to find out which one is right for you and which should be required in your community.

certificare and generally mean to attest authoritatively or to confirm that something is true or as represented. Sometimes the two words are used interchangeably, but it is more accurate to use “certification” when referring to individuals, or sometimes to a specific product, and “accreditation” when applying the concept to organizations such as schools, businesses, or a department.

In this bulletin, some of the major opportunities available to individuals and communities are outlined. These are opportunities to improve, raise the bar of professionalism at all levels, and provide residents with assurance that their trees, waterways, and public lands are in good hands. That is, that they are taken seriously and managed professionally.



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