



PLANET Member Survey Response for a Proposed OSHA Arborist Vertical Standard

In responding to OSHA’s Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for an Arborist Standard, TCIA was interested in characterizing the tree care-related work and resultant occupational injuries in employment sectors other than the traditional commercial tree care company. We partnered with PLANET¹ and in mid-October 2008 conducted a ZoomerangTM survey with their members. There were 92 partial or complete responses to this survey. Results are presented below.

Section 1 - Companies affected by this proposed standard:

1. How many full-time field employees does your company employ overall?

92 valid responses; 5,191 total employees; average **61.8 employees per company**

The companies that do tree work tend to be **larger** than their landscaping-only counterparts:

| Business Focus | Landscape only | Landscape & tree care |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Median no. employees | 16.0 | 21.0 |
| Average no. employees | 28.2 | 97.0 |

2. Does your firm provide tree trimming and/or removal services? For the purpose of answering this question, we define “tree” as any woody perennial that is 15 ft. (5 m) or more tall and that has at least one stem that is equal to or greater than five (5) inches (12.5 cm.) in diameter at the base.
50% (46 responses) – *Yes*
50% (46 responses) – *No*

Note: Of the 46 companies that answered “Yes” to question 2 above, only 34 provided information for the remainder of the questions on the survey.

¹ The Professional Landcare Network is an international association serving lawn care professionals, landscape management contractors, design/build/installation professionals, and interior plantscapers. PLANET was formed on January 1, 2005, when the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) merged. PLANET currently has about 4,000 member firms.

3. What percentage of your overall business revenue is derived from tree trimming and tree removal?
The *weighted average* for both services combined: **5%**

Note: Thirty-three out of 34 companies reported doing at least some tree trimming, and 29 out of 34 did at least some tree removal.
4. How many non-English-speaking Hispanics are in your *tree care* field force?
Average **8.6 per company, 7.7% of the workforce**
5. How many of your employees work full-time in tree care?
Average **1.9 per company, 1.7% of the workforce**
6. How many landscape service employees may work part-time (i.e., part of the season) in tree care?
Average **8.9 per company, 7.9% of the workforce**
7. Does your company employ day-laborers for tree care work?
97.1% - No
2.9% - Yes
8. Do any employees climb and/or use aerial lifts to prune or perform other work in trees?
58.8% - No
41.2% - Yes

Section 2 – Accidents during tree trimming/removal activities

9. How many tree care-related, lost-time accidents or fatalities has your company experienced during the past 5 year period? A “lost-time” injury is one in which the injured employee misses at least one day of work beyond the initial day of the injury.
Twenty-eight (28) companies (82%) reported **zero lost-time tree care accidents** in the past five years. **Six (6) companies** reported **one (1) lost-time accident each** in that period.
10. Accident Data
 - a. How many total days of work were missed because of this accident?
Average: **5.3 days per accident**; lowest was 1 day, highest was 21 days
 - b. Was this accident fatal? **All six accidents were non-fatal.**
 - c. In what operation did the accident occur? Pick the phrase that best describes the operation:
Tree climbing – 2; Chain saw operation on the ground – 2; Tree felling – 1; Fall from stepladder – 1
 - d. What caused the accident? Pick the phrase that best describes the cause:
Fall – 3; Cut by chain saw – 2; Struck by tree or limb – 1
 - e. How old was the injured employee? Average age: **29.8 yrs.**
 - f. How long had the employee worked for you?
Four months to one year - 3
Over one year - 3