



2007 WAA Legislative Highlights – Summary

(Legislation, Standards, OSHA Updates, BMP's and Publications)

submitted by Jeff Treu

EAB – WAA Web Site: The WAA Web site was updated to reflect the addition of the Wisconsin's emerald ash borer Internet portal, <http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov/>. 5-16-07.

EAB quarantines Illinois Expanded: The federal quarantine imposed on Illinois expanded to include an in-state quarantine.

2007 Assembly Bill 36 authorizes DNR to provide match-free urban forestry grants to communities in catastrophic storm situations. Approved by the governor on 5-30-07.

2007 Green Industry Day on the Hill, 2-14-07: an opportunity to meet with legislators and discuss the issues that affect us. WAA helped sponsor the event.

2007 Assembly Bill 181: an act to create 443.015 of the statutes; relating to continuing education for architects, landscape architects, professional engineers, designers of engineering systems, and land surveyors. Referred to Committee on Labor, Elections and Urban Affairs, 12-04-07. Public hearing held.

Senate Bill 197 Fertilizer Bill: to create 94.643 of the statutes; relating to restrictions on the use and sale of fertilizer containing phosphorus and other lawn fertilizer and providing a penalty. Amended in the Senate and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. 1-17-08.

Federal Budget for Urban & Community Forests passed and includes an increase in EAB/invasives funding about \$30 million for the Urban and Community Forestry Program (2008).

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Update: Senate failed to invoke cloture to move to final debate and then passage of S.1639.

“No Match” Rule issued by DHS (Department of Homeland Security): requires employers receiving “no match” letters to take action. 8/07.

SB-248 authorizing the creation of local park districts referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (Senate). An amendment to include urban forestry grants is supported by DNR and UFC.

ANSI A300 Updates: The A300 Committee approved a new Lightning A300 standard. Revisions for the Pruning A300 and Pruning BMP are expected in the first half of 2008.

Best Management Practices: Integrated Pest Management and Integrated Vegetation Management are completed. A major thrust will be to work to internationalization of standards and practices in tree care.

OSHA rule on Personal Protective Equipment: OSHA has announced a final rule on employer-paid personal protective equipment (PPE) effective 2-13-08.

Senate Bill 1717: The legislation was first introduced in June as an EAB-specific bill and was later modified to include all invasive species. It would create a low-interest revolving loan fund for communities for the purchase of capital equipment, contractual work, and for replacement trees within quarantine areas. In addition, the bill would allow states to contract with local units of government to perform EAB duties. The fund would be administered through the US Forest Service. Please call or write your representative explaining what EAB or other invasive pest threat might mean to you. Reference the Invasive Species Revolving Loan Fund in the Senate version of the Farm Bill.

Chapter NR 40-Invasive Species: WDNR held listening sessions in January 2008. Draft rule will be revised prior to seeking Natural Resources Board approval for formal public hearings early in 2008.

Senate Bill 297 authorizes DATCP to change by rule the annual license fees for nursery growers, nursery dealers, and Christmas tree growers. Referred to Committee on Agriculture and Higher Education. Public hearing held 12-05-07.

AB 341 relates to changing the time when impact fees from developers for acquiring public park land, dedicating storm water treatment facilities to the public must be used. Approved by the governor on 1-04-08. Wisconsin Act 44.

For current legislative contact information, please refer to the WAA directory.

The Wisconsin Legislature Web site is: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>

Federal Budget Cuts for Urban Forestry 2009 Released

The president's budget for 2009 was released and all State and Private Forestry programs contained within the USDA Forest Service's budget experienced big cuts. The Urban and Community Forestry program is scheduled for an 82% reduction resulting in a \$5 million budget. In the coming weeks, Alliance for Community Trees (ACT) will work with its partners in the Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition to develop a response and recommendations for the FY 2009 budget. ACT will keep urban forestry advocates informed and invite state and local entities to add their support to the united message of support for urban forests in our nation's budget.

Urban Forestry Best Management Practices

The American Public Works Association and their partners – Forest Service, National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, Society for Municipal Arborists and Davey Resource Group – have developed four BMPs especially designed for urban forestry entitled: Budget & Funding; Staffing; Ordinances, Regulations & Public Policies; and Urban Forest Management Plan. To access these plus information on the Click, Listen & Learn Presentation, “Developing and Managing an Urban Forestry Program for Public Works,” visit: <http://www.apwa.net/About/CoopAgreements/urbanforestry/>.

Whistleblower Policy and Procedures

This policy establishes standards and procedures to ensure that the Wisconsin Arborist Association (WAA) is in compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. Whistleblower procedures should be updated and consistent with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (Section 301.4, concerning procedures for making complaints about accounting and auditing) and provided directly to the WAA Finance Committee as defined in the constitution. The procedures provide employees, volunteers, and board members with an avenue by which they can submit a concern to the WAA Finance Committee. More information can be found on the Web site www.waa-isa.org.