

2009 Annual Arborists Certification Report
-Annual business meeting 2/8/2010-

The WAA has assigned 104 individual continuing education units for the calendar year of 2009. This is a 20% increase over 2008. The Certification program in Wisconsin has 511 Certified Arborists, up from 484; 11 Board Certified Master Arborists, up from 10; 6 Municipal Arborists, up from 5; 15 Utility Arborists, up from 13; 3 Tree Worker certifications remains the same and 1 Aerial Lift certification up from 0. Three Certification Exams were scheduled in 2009; however one was canceled due to no participant.

By now most or all Certified Arborists have received the new “Ethics Policy” to be signed and returned to ISA as a requirement to obtain ISO (International Organization for Standardization) certification. This is a benefit to the Certification program and its’ integrity and recognition.

Items considered particularly relevant to general membership are noted as follows:

- The end of Domains for the purpose of test scoring and retesting on an arborist exam. Full retakes are now required (as of 12/31/09) and a passing score of 72% up from 70%
- Tree picture I.D. will be eliminated from the exam by July of 2010. The pictures have been a primary source of complaint and unresolved problem since their inception. They will be replaced with Taxonomy, i.e. “How to I.D.” questions. It will not be an easier exam.
- Computer based testing has been available nearly all of 2009 for the Certified Arborist exam. These are arranged directly with the ISA, do cost a bit more, but increase convenience and include immediate Pass/Fail results.
- A higher level of training and more frequent training is now required of Exam Proctors (those administering exams) to maintain high levels of testing integrity.
- The “Tree Worker” certification is under discussion to be changed from a combined written and skills test, to 2 separately scored exams. Both the Tree worker and the Aerial lift Specialist would take the same written exam to qualify as a “Tree Worker”, adding “climber” and/or “aerial lift” as specialties. The goal is to stimulate growth and use of this very under utilized program. Further updates on this are forth coming.
- A “Tree Risk” specialty certification is being vigorously worked on and should also be available in the not too distant future.

As with every year, we need to keep our eyes and ears open for fraudulent certifications and membership representations. Those who engage in such practices are not likely to be good representatives of our industry and profession. Reports can be filed with the ISA form available on-line or contact me personally.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Cassity – WAA Certification Liaison to the ISA

