



Arboricultural Policy

Information provided by Jeff Treu

- 2007 Assembly Bill 36—Relating to: grants for catastrophic damage caused to urban forests. The bill authorizes the DNR to provide match-free urban forestry grants to communities in catastrophic storm situations. The bill passed the assembly on a unanimous voice vote and is now on to the state senate. Please consider contacting the committee chair or your representatives to express your opinions on the bill. <http://www.legis.state.wi.us>.
- 2007 Assembly Bill 181 – An act to create 443.015 of the statutes; relating to: continuing education for architects, landscape architects, and professional engineers, on Labor and Industry in the Assembly on March 19, 2007.
- 2007 Green Industry Day on the Hill – February 14, 2007, was another opportunity to meet with legislators and discuss the importance of the green industry to the state's economy and the issues that affect us. WAA helped sponsor the event.

Your senator, state representative or congressman wants to know your special legislative interests. The best way to let them know your position is to write to his or her office or home. "We like a letter because it becomes a matter of record," said one lawmaker. "One paragraph, stating whether you are for or against an issue and why is enough. It is not necessary to write seven or eight pages."

When writing to a legislator, include your return address on the letter, not just on the envelope. Identify your subject clearly, and if possible, indicate the piece of legislation by number. State your reason for writing, how the issue would affect you, your family, business, community and state. Avoid stereotyped phrases and sentences that give the appearance of form letters or threats.

If you have doubts about how to approach your legislator, remember that your views are most important. If you are an expert or have considerable experience in your field of interest or business, don't be afraid to share that knowledge with your legislator. They will appreciate it. Lawmakers, in fact, welcome constructive

criticism. They also welcome a pat on the back when credit is due. Finally, don't forget to write and say, "Thank you."

When addressing your correspondence to a legislator, use terms "The Honorable John Doe" on both the envelope and in the heading of your letter. The greeting should read, "Dear Senator or Representative Doe." The same rules apply to state constitutional officers and members of Congress.

If you merely wish to leave a message for your legislator, we advise you to use the legislative "hotline." A request for a return call will usually get a response but it may take several days in coming.

If your call is urgent and involves questions of a lawmaker or some discussion, then we advise you to call that legislator directly at his or her office.

As with written correspondence, be concise, complete and courteous in your phone conversations.

Legislative Hotline – 1-800-362-9472
(In the Madison area) – 266-9960

Get to know your legislator. Your ideas and opinions could make a difference!