

# New Rules for Tree Experts Adopted

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Last spring, the Rules of the NJ Board of Tree Experts (the Board) were officially adopted and posted to the NJ Register. The adoption and posting officially implements the Licensed Tree Expert and Licensed Tree Care Operator Act passed in 2010, N.J.S.A. 45:15C-11 et seq. The law requires contractors performing work on trees in New Jersey to register with the Board, have at least one licensed individual at each branch location, and carry the appropriate type and level of liability and workers' compensation insurance.

The law also requires tree care companies to abide by national standards of practice for tree care and tree worker safety, and licensed individuals to attain at least 32 hours of continuing education every two years.

## WHAT MUNICIPALITIES CAN DO

It is important for all municipalities and residents to be aware it is now illegal to perform tree work for hire without a license and business registration. Initially, the Board will be busy with registering tree care companies and licensing individuals.

Municipalities can assist in reporting those who have not yet registered with the Board, appear to be performing improper tree care, or are operating in an unsafe manner (e.g., undefined work zones, workers without personal protective equipment, etc.).

At times, code enforcement or police may be needed to shut down a jobsite until the potential violator is brought into compliance with the law. Code enforcement officials should familiarize themselves with the law and how to contact the Board.



### A new structure

The law establishes a two-tiered licensing structure creating Licensed Tree Care Operators and Licensed Tree Experts. See the Board's website, [njtreeexperts.org](http://njtreeexperts.org), for details on what work each is authorized to perform. The Board of Tree Experts is authorized to effectuate the law through compliance and enforcement.

The law had support from County and Municipal governments and the NJ Department of Community Affairs, which reported in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, the chief complaints regarding tree services were a result of fly-by-night tree removal companies. Tree care industries have long supported the law because of the high number of injuries and fatalities experienced by untrained tree care workers. In the seven years between when the Law was passed until the time the rules were passed effectuating the law, 26 people lost their lives in New Jersey while performing tree work.

### Standard for safety

Municipal and line clearance workers are exempted from the law, however, the Board of Tree Experts strongly recommends the unregulated community strive to meet national safety and tree care standards. The Tree Care Industry Association has developed a set of generally accepted industry standards for tree care practices, which can be found in ANSI A300 and ANSI Z133. Anyone seeking help in performing this work to a higher and safer standard is encouraged to contact the Board for guidance. 📌

@ For additional information on business registration, licensing, and the Law; contact the NJ Board of Tree Experts at **732-534-0982**, [njtreeexperts@gmail.com](mailto:njtreeexperts@gmail.com) or visit their website at [njtreeexperts.org](http://njtreeexperts.org).