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Incidents Don’t Just Happen

In tree care, it’s a regrettable fact that the industry suffers a higher rate of incidents than most other professions. It’s also a fact, statistically confirmed, that management’s commitment to professionalism, combined with consistent training and regular safety meetings, noticeably reduces the number of incidents that “happen.”

Management must provide the proper PPE, of course, and ask workers to undertake only the tasks for which they are trained and capable of performing. Unfortunately, too many companies put their workers at risk and seem to have only a passing concern for their safety. While we all know arborists who take risks they shouldn’t, despite training, safety nevertheless begins with the employer.

Training is an OSHA requirement for employers, and, according to TCIA’s 2016 incident survey, it’s also a very real way to reduce incidents. The survey asked companies how often they trained – weekly, at least once a month, when needed or never. The results showed that companies having weekly training sessions had a day-away-from-work, restricted-work-activities, job transfer (DART) rate that was one-quarter that for companies that never trained. And the DART rate doubles when frequency drops from weekly to once a month.

Also, according to the data, companies that employ a CTSP had a DART rate half that of companies without a CTSP.

Based on the convincing evidence, TCIA is committed to assisting employers by building the systems and providing the training needed to send crews into the field that can work more safely. In the past year:

- Almost 900 arborists attended TCIA-organized and OSHA-funded EHAP and aerial-rescue workshops;
- More than 1,300 arborists attended workshops funded by the TCIA Foundation’s Arborist Safety Training Institute (ASTI) covering tree climbing, rigging, aerial rescue, EHAP, ground operations and the safe operation of aerial lifts, chainsaws, stump grinders and cranes;
- More than 400 arborists attended independently organized workshops using TCIA’s Tree Care Academy manuals;
- Almost 27,000 safety CEU hours were processed by TCIA, as Certified Treecare Safety Professionals studied and worked to create a culture of safety within their companies.

TCIA also is finishing up production of a revised and expanded Tailgate Safety manual for the industry that includes 100 sessions and online resources, such as notes and video training clips.

According to TCIA’s survey, the average DART rate for tree care companies was 2.4 per 100 workers. Companies that were not TCIA members, were not TCIA accredited, did not have a CTSP on staff and never trained had a DART rate of 13.6. At companies that make a commitment to safety, fewer incidents “happen.” It’s really as simple as that.

Which type of company do you want to be, and which company do you think arborists want to work for?

Mark Garvin, Publisher
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A Voth Truck Bodies aluminum dump body with a 1/4-inch marine-grade aluminum floor and 3/16-inch marine-grade aluminum walls. The lighter aluminum bodies can be more economical and allow for heavier payloads while maintaining vehicle weight restrictions. Photos courtesy of Voth Truck Bodies.

By Rick Howland

From the smallest one-person tree care business doing routine backyard work to the nationwide, full-service conglomerate with a long menu of operational services, there’s a truck body for every and any use. While body styles of trucks used in tree work can range from a slew of flatbed configurations to forestry or chip-dump bodies, it is the latter on which this article largely focuses.

Research and those spoken with for this piece support our premise that there’s a forestry body that will fit any truck chassis and meet any specific need. Moreover, manufacturers are quick to note that any truck chassis used in tree care can be refitted with a different truck body as the needs of the company change.

You can find standard bodies in the most popular sizes ranging from less than 10 feet to 16 feet. Certainly, one can select from any number of standard body styles of varying sizes or opt for highly customized versions. What do you want or need? Removable top? Custom lighting? Pintle hitch? Underbody tool boxes? Smooth sides for attaching company graphics? Wheel-chock and/or cone holders? Safety equipment such as fire extinguishers or safety triangles? It is all available to you.

Standard units are usually a stock item and can be installed in a day or two, according to one manufacturer. Custom orders, of course, take a bit more time and cost more, but if the product addresses the company mission, the delay and the added cost are secondary considerations.

One of the more interesting evolutions in this area has been the introduction of specialty materials such as aluminum, which is finding its way from naval applications to aerospace and is now appearing in truck bodies. One example would be those available from Canadian company Voth Truck Bodies.

“We use marine-grade aluminum … same as the Navy,” says Omar B. Sandlin II, vice president of business development for Drive Products/Voth Truck Bodies. Demand has been such “that we have increased our capacity three times and are still jammed with orders,” he says.

His company builds both custom steel and aluminum bodies at its Canadian facilities for distribution to tree care companies throughout North America.

“We manufacture the Voth bodies at our Cortland plant, both steel and aluminum truck bodies for tree care, and we are finding a significant, increased demand for our lightweight aluminum bodies of all sizes and applications.” (According to company literature, Voth aluminum chipper bodies are made for heavy-duty service and are custom designed according to the customer’s needs and specifications.)

“We do bodies from an 8-foot-8-inch body to 12-foot, the latter ideally used for tree and shrub waste,” he continues.

In addition to the weight savings achieved by using aluminum versus steel, Sandlin explains that, “We have a unique...
design in which we do not use either internal or external side posts. Instead, we use heavier aluminum for the floors, which gives the box its stability and strength.”

Sandlin maintains that, “The 5083-H32 marine-grade aluminum we use is the highest corrosive-resistant aluminum you can buy today, and it has the highest tensile strength as well. We manufacture these truck bodies using a proven unibody sub-frame design (similar to modern auto design), which is very critical. That allows us to install the body 36 inches from the road surface.

“That’s important,” Sandlin says, “since we maintain that this is the safest height for stability. The design provides for a lower center of gravity for a loaded vehicle, and the design also helps to evenly distribute the load across the entire width of the body.

“From a weight-savings perspective, these Voth truck-body products typically are 47 percent lighter than their steel counterparts,” he states. “In the end, we expect to find that the lighter weight will reduce the total annual cost of maintenance on the truck. Think about it – the more lightweight the truck is, the less wear there is on tires, for example, and also there is less torque and, therefore, less wear on the truck’s chassis and other components. Of course,” he adds, “in reducing the weight of the truck by using aluminum, the operator also can increase the capacity of each load of material.”

Sandlin reports that the company exhibited an urban-forestry chipper body measuring 7.5-feet long with 7.8-yards of chip capacity at a recent trade show in Boston. The aluminum body, he says, weighed in at 1,600 pounds unladen, versus 2,800 pounds for a comparable body using steel.

Sandlin concludes by noting that the Voth truck bodies feature what he calls side-pack storage boxes, keyed into a central locking system. “This side storage compartment also is made of the same marine-grade aluminum and is designed to maximize space in the truck body,” he says.

Bob Dray is vice president of sales and marketing for Utility One Source, comprised of eight companies headquartered in Virginia, the most familiar to the tree care industry being Forestry Equipment of Virginia (FEVA).

“We primarily use Southco Industries for forestry bodies, chip bodies and tool boxes,” says Dray. “Our rear-mount flatbed bodies (for lifts) are custom-built here.

“Tree care is using rear-mount aerial lifts increasingly because of their versatility in backing into jobs and being able to get in quickly and efficiently. Because the lift is mounted behind the rear axle, it can reach farther backward.
“What is unique about our design is the strength, because we mount the lift elevators transversely,” says Dray. “For example, the elevator for a 75-foot lift is mounted across the axle, not parallel with the frame rails. Additionally, this gives us more storage on the rear deck for items such as (ground-protection) mats and log carts,” Dray says, adding, “These lifts we install are Terex units, 56, 60 and 70 feet. All we do is make the beds and install the lifts here.”

Regarding the company’s chip boxes, Dray says, “On the forestry (truck body) side, we developed with Southco a wider ladder (storage) box located behind the cab. We make ours wide enough to store and secure more equipment, such as a gasoline-powered pruner. These (boxes) used to be small and located on the street side of the truck, but we made ours wider for more storage and also lockable on the curb side for safety,” Dray reports.

“Among some other things we did box-wise on the rear-mount-type lift trucks is

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to make the tool box on the driver’s side into a separate compartment to keep things segregated, for example, to keep fuel away from tools and other equipment on board,” Dray concludes.

Richard Goforth, vice president of Southco Industries, says, “We manufacture a broad range of bodies from a 10-yard forestry box to a 40-yard chip body.” He notes, “As standard equipment, on every body we do both a cross box and an underbody tool box.

“As far as determining what’s right for the customer who needs a truck body, we know we need to match the body with what they are doing, whether it’s for a major take-down company or the backyard operator,” Goforth maintains. “Our most popular truck body has been the Model 1472,” he says, “which is 14 feet long and 72 inches high and which holds 20 yards of material. The reason this is so popular is that it is a high-volume truck, yet it still falls below CDL (commercial driver’s license) requirements.”

He says Southco typically uses Ford, Freightliner and International trucks. “Right now, we are selling more Fords, the F750D, due to less cost, but they stand up great,” Goforth reports.

If larger loads are required, requiring, in turn, CDL licensing, Goforth says the company offers bodies that are 16 feet long and 84 inches high.

“All of our truck bodies are made of galvannealed steel, which is steel that is galvanized for corrosion protection, then annealed for a stronger surface that is easily paintable. We can produce bodies with bracing or with a flat side,” he says. “It’s up to the customer. Most customers want a flat-sided box for attaching company graphics.”

Goforth continues, “For big operators who need a lot of large bodies, we provide, for example, up to 22-foot log bodies that are 75 inches tall and made of Hardox material. (Hardox is the trade name for a high-wear, abrasion-resistant steel deemed to be stronger and more durable than standard mild steel.) Those are typically paired with a log loader. In our case, we install either a Prentice or Palfinger log-loader unit on a tandem chassis having a gross-weight rating (GVWR) of 66,000 pounds.

“In truck bodies, we do the whole range, and business is great now,” he says. “People are spending money, so it’s a good time to be in this business, and I expect more of the same next year.”

He concludes his remarks with an aside, referring to a relatively new standard feature, its SureLock Sidebar system, which is an anti-theft system for the company’s line of tool boxes. “We were challenged by a utility contractor to come up with tool boxes you can’t break into. The result was so successful that it’s now a standard item.”

At Altec, Caleb Boullion, market manager for truck bodies, says “We make a variety of truck bodies from steel, aluminum or fiberglass, but primarily for chip/dump bodies we use galvanneal steel for both stock and custom bodies.”

“Altec has been manufacturing truck bodies since 1929, and we find that the steel product is the best for the rugged tree care environment,” he says, adding that other units such as utility bodies will utilize aluminum or fiberglass.
Continuing, Boullion says, “One of the big differentiating factors for Altec’s truck bodies is that we electro-coat the paint primer onto the completed chip/dump bodies. This is the exact-same process as the automobile industry uses, but we do it in different tanks.”

He explains that, “This process molecularly bonds the primer to the steel surface using a high-voltage electric charge. This extends the life of the product by adding an additional layer of corrosion protection to the steel. Galvanneal affects only the surface layer of the steel; our process allows the primer to bond through the galvanneal surface deeper into the steel for a longer life.

“Altec offers stock bodies from 11 to 14 feet, depending on the application,” Boullion says.

“We can provide flat-sided chip bodies, but mostly we standardize our line with corrugated sides for an improved strength-to-weight ratio,” he says. “For that reason, our bodies are mostly corrugated on the exterior versus welding corrugated pieces inside the box.”

And they will custom build a truck body. “Yes, we do custom. We’ve been doing custom bodies since 1929,” Boullion states.

When asked what’s trending among tree care buyers, Boullion says, “Tree care buyers are all about longevity. They want trucks that last a long, long time, and many are so used up they are not traded-in.

“Once again, we standardize the way we address this by offering larger boxes to address the need. Because they want to make fewer trips to dump, they tend toward buying larger-capacity trucks,” he reports.

With one exception, he adds – tree care buyers don’t deviate from on-board tool storage. According to Boullion, “We see some customers going away from ladder boxes on their trucks. They tend not to carry ladders any more because of safety and efficiency. Many companies are purchasing lifts to reduce the need for climbing and using ladders.

“We do include as a standard item a single-handed hand-prop designed to prevent the dump box from coming down while dumping chips,” says Boullion. “The prop handle goes all the way to the edge of the curb side of the dump. We do this so that when the dump prop is set or released, we do not have the operator under the body.” (See photo)

So, when it comes to truck bodies, if you know what you want and need, it is really up to you what you get.
Noel Boyer named to TCIA Board of Directors

Noel Boyer, CTSP, owner of All About Trees LLC, in Springfield, Missouri, has been appointed by the TCIA Board of Directors to complete the board term vacated by the retirement of Steve Marshall from The Davey Tree Expert Company.

Boyer will be sworn in at Winter Management Conference in Hawaii in February.

Boyer has been involved in the tree care industry for 22 years, the last 12 as owner of his own company, All About Trees, a seven-year TCIA member company.

He earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Missouri State University and is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist (BCMA) and a TCIA Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP).

He has served on the Midwestern Chapter of ISA’s Board of Directors and is currently the finance officer for the chapter. He also has served on the Springfield, Mo., Tree City USA advisory committee, the Missouri Community Forestry Council and the Ozarks Technical Community College Advisory Board.

He is a seven-time Midwestern Chapter Tree Climbing Champion.

Regarding his experience, “I have built a million-plus-dollar company from the ground up in 10 years,” Boyer said in his application to the board.

He also explained one of the reasons he wanted to serve on the board.

“I know that small companies and large companies see a lot of the same problems, just on a different scale, but I have a much stronger connection with the small companies that are trying to make the most of their limited time and resources to succeed in this industry. I feel that the small companies are underrepresented on the TCIA board, and I hope to help find ways to boost the up-and-coming companies willing to invest in their own success by joining TCIA.”

Bandit celebrating 35th anniversary in 2018

Bandit Industries will spend all of 2018 celebrating its 35th anniversary at its mid-Michigan facility.

“Thirty-five years is a long time to be in business,” says Jerry Morey, Bandit president and co-owner. “That’s why we’re going to take some time in 2018 to appreciate where we’ve been, what we’ve accomplished and how we want to keep innovating and evolving — for our employees, for our customers and for our industry.”

Bandit Industries was started by Mike Morey, Sr., and Diane Morey as Foremost Fabrications in a small, one-room shop. “The first chipper was a Model 100 Brush Bandit. That chipper caught on in the industry, backed by our commitment to quality and our customers,” says Morey. “It became so popular in the industry that most people knew Foremost Fabrications as ‘Bandit,’ so in 1986, we took the name officially as Bandit Industries.”

Today, more than 60,000 Bandit machines are in use all around the world, and more than 200 dealer locations serve customers in six continents. During the growth over the last three decades, Bandit never lost sight of who it is and what it does, says Morey.

“Bandit is a company dedicated to producing the highest-quality equipment for the hardest-working men and women,” he says. “For the last 35 years, we’ve worked tirelessly to build the best equipment, and in 2018, we reaffirm our commitment to them and to our industry.”

Sherrill, Inc., launches fund to support families of injured tree workers

Sherrill, Inc., recently formed the Fallen Families Fund, a charity dedicated to providing direct financial assistance to families and individuals who have been impacted by death or injury associated with tree care and working at height.

“There are more than 100 reported tree care and work-at-height-related fatalities, plus many hundreds of industry-related injuries annually. This makes tree care and working at height statistically two of the most dangerous industries in the United States,” the company said in a statement announcing the fund.

The objective of the Fallen Families Fund is to help reduce the financial burden of a work-related injury or death by providing grants that will help the individual or family endure their healing or recovery immediately following an accident on the job. The Fallen Families Fund will work to build an endowment that will serve these affected families, and it will provide cash donations to offset financial hardships.

Tripp Wyckoff, CEO of Sherrill, Inc., says he believes giving back to the community is an essential part of the company. “I’ve supported the idea of the Fallen Families Fund from the beginning. There is an obvious need in the industry, and it was immediately clear that this is our opportunity to help the families and individuals that our business relies on. Now that Sherrilltree.com and TreeStuff.com are under one umbrella, we can finally make the Fallen Families Fund a reality.”

Sherrill will be assuming the administrative costs of the fund, meaning that 100 percent of all donations raised or received will directly benefit families in need. The company and its subsidiaries will support the fund by organizing fundraising events and promotions. It also will solicit voluntary donations from customers at each of its web stores, and Sherrill will provide a substantial annual monetary donation.

Sherrill kicked off the fundraising efforts selling Fallen Families Fund T-shirts in both the Sherrilltree.com and TreeStuff.com...
booths at the TCI EXPO in Columbus, Ohio, in November, with 100 percent of the proceeds from these shirt sales going directly to the Fallen Families Fund.

**Terex Utilities to deliver 5,000 aerial devices to China**

Terex Utilities and its dealer in China, Xuzhou Handler Special Vehicles Co., Ltd., have signed a letter of intent for Xuzhou to purchase 5,000 insulated aerial devices from Terex over a five-year period, with a total value of more than $250 million. These products will support the continuing improvement and ongoing adoption of live-line work practices in the Chinese public utility sector.

Terex Utilities has partnered with Xuzhou Handler for several years, working with them to develop and implement best practices for live-line work. Since 2013, Terex has organized a series of safety-focused reverse trade missions in the United States, which included facilitating safety standards and regulations in China. Recently, delegates from 14 Chinese utilities visited the United States to participate in a two-week training program inspired by Terex and sponsored by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (US-TDA).

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**ANSI Standards Part 2 Soils Management, Part 6 Planting and Transplanting, and Part 7 IVM under public review**

TCIA has placed a call for public review of the following American national tree care standards.

- Part 2-2011 Soil Management
  - a. Modification
  - b. Fertilization
  - c. Drainage
- Part 6-2012 Planting and Transplanting
- Part 7-2012 Integrated Vegetation Management


Keeping trees healthy is a main concern of the TCIA, an ANSI member and ANSI-accredited standards developer. TCIA serves as the secretariat for the ANSI A300 series of Standards for Tree Care Management Operations (ANSI A300 Parts 1 through 10). A300 standards are written by the ANSI-accredited A300 committee.

ANSI A300 documents provide standard definitions and tree care management standards for all aspects of tree-health management, including pruning, utility pruning, soil management and fertilization, tree support structures, tree management and preservation during construction and land use, tree planting and transplanting, integrated vegetation management for utility rights of way and tree-risk assessment.

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Loftness’ line of snow blowers accommodates many makes and models of skid steers and tractors. Built with heavy-duty construction for maximum reliability and high performance, they are offered for a wide variety of flow rates, starting as low as 15 gpm. Seven models are available in 72- to 84-inch widths, each with a universal coupler, a single motor design and an electric-spout rotator. Eleven rear-mount, PTO-driven tractor models are also offered with one-, two- or three-auger configurations. Available in 60- to 108-inch widths, they accommodate tractors with 540- or 1,000-rpm PTO drives and 16- to 200-PTO horsepower. The units feature two-stage designs for efficient operation. All components feature heavy-duty construction, including the auger, impeller, spout, gearbox and chain drive. Standard features include adjustable skid shoes, reinforced body braces and shear-bolt protection. (800-828-7624 [U.S. and Canada]; info@loftness.com)

Reach-All CraneMate platform

Reach-All, LLC’s new CraneMate is a 6-foot, 600-pound-capacity, center-mounted platform designed for mounting to the tip of a swing jib on larger boom trucks or for use on smaller, 8- to 10-ton boom trucks, “per factory capacity.” The platform has a package weight of 570 pounds. Self-contained, hydraulic-powered auto leveling is designed to provide safety of personnel and stability of payloads. The platform will level regardless of the location of the payload inside the platform and independently of where it is rotationally positioned. The 180-degree, full-platform rotation with proportional controls enables positioning of the platform in the work area so workers don’t need to bunch up at one corner of the platform or stretch unsafely for otherwise hard-to-reach areas. With the auto-hydraulic leveling and 180-degree rotation, the platform can be repositioned without being tilted out of level. The “stow-and-go” feature allows the platform to be attached and positioned to the crane tip for safe road travel. (www.reachallplatforms.com; 941-256-4165)

Loftness snow blowers for skid steers

Loftness’ line of snow blowers accommodates many makes and models of skid steers and tractors. Built with heavy-duty construction for maximum reliability and high performance, they are offered for a wide variety of flow rates, starting as low as 15 gpm. Seven models are available in 72- to 84-inch widths, each with a universal coupler, a single motor design and an electric-spout rotator. Eleven rear-mount, PTO-driven tractor models are also offered with one-, two- or three-auger configurations. Available in 60- to 108-inch widths, they accommodate tractors with 540- or 1,000-rpm PTO drives and 16- to 200-PTO horsepower. The units feature two-stage designs for efficient operation. All components feature heavy-duty construction, including the auger, impeller, spout, gearbox and chain drive. Standard features include adjustable skid shoes, reinforced body braces and shear-bolt protection. (800-828-7624 [U.S. and Canada]; info@loftness.com)

Vermeer BC1800XL Brush Chipper with gasoline engine

Vermeer’s new BC1800XL gas brush chipper, its largest, most-powerful gas model to date, is designed for the same level of productivity and reliability as a similar-sized, diesel-powered model. Outfitted with a 165-hp, PSI-5.7 L gas engine, it can handle logs up to 18 inches in diameter. The onboard Vermeer SmartFeed control system monitors engine rpms, senses jams and automatically stops or reverses the rollers. Vermeer’s EcoIdle engine-control system automatically lowers the engine speed when material is not being fed into the chipper and increases speed when new material is added, increasing efficiency and reducing noise. Vermeer’s Tree Commander remote control comes standard. The 67-inch-wide feed table provides ample room for material. A four-position upper feed-control bar enables the operator to stop the feed rollers and select forward or reverse. A patented bottom-feed-stop bar that disables hydraulic flow to the feed rollers when contact is made provides additional operator protection. (Vermeer.com)

Sennebogen 718 purpose-built feller/handler

Equipped with a Hultdins hydraulic tree saw on a 43-foot (13 m) telescoping boom, Sennebogen’s 718 log handler provides arborists with a single, compact, powerful machine to fell, trim and stack wood. The processing head is designed to cut trees up to 18 inches (457 mm) in diameter and 40 feet (13 m) high. With its hydraulically elevating maXcab, the Sennebogen 718 offers visibility and operational advantages for operators, providing a more direct view into the trees rather than looking straight up. With its low ground pressure, this wheeled material handler is intended to be particularly efficient on sensitive lands, such as golf courses and soft soils. The 718 is designed to be more fuel efficient, mobile and nimble than traditional carriers such as modified excavators, cranes or other forestry equipment used on larger tree-removal projects. Weighing 48,000 pounds (21.5 metric tons), the machine’s compact design is intended to provide easy transport between job sites without waivers/permits. Sennebogen LLC is located in Stanley, North Carolina. (704-347-4910; sales@sennebogenllc.com)
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### Industry Almanac

**January 5, 2018**
SHG Electrical Hazards Awareness Program/EHAP Workshop
Minneapolis Parks & Rec, Minneapolis, MN
Contact: 1-800-733-2622; www.tcia.org/training

**January 8-11, 2018**
Advanced Landscape Plant IPM PHC Short Course
University of Maryland, College Park, MD
Contact: (301) 405-3911; umdentomology@umd.edu

**January 15-17, 2018**
MGIX – Midwest Green Industry Xperience
Columbus, OH
Contact: www.mgix18.com

**January 18, 2018**
Conn. Tree Protective Association Annual Meeting
Southington, CT
Contact: www.CTPA.org

**January 18-19, 2018**
Think Trees New Mexico Conference
Albuquerque, NM
Contact: www.thinktreesnm.org

**January 21-23, 2018**
PennDel Shade Tree Symposium
Lancaster, PA
Contact: www.PennDelISA.org

**January 23-24, 2018**
Certified Treecare Safety Professional/CTSP Workshop
Atlanta, GA
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**January 23-25, 2018**
Indiana Arborist Association Annual Conference
Indianapolis, IN
Contact: www.indiana-arborist.org

**February 4-8, 2018**
Winter Management Conference
Maui, Hawaii
Contact: 1-800-733-2622; www.tcia.org

**February 12-14, 2018**
Arboriculture Society of Michigan ArborCon
Lancing, MI
Contact: www.asm-isa.org

**February 14-16, 2018**
ISA Ontario Chapter Annual Conference
Huntsville, ON, Canada
Contact: www.ISAOntario.com

**March 13-14, 2018**
Certified Treecare Safety Professional/CTSP Workshop
Westminster, MD
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**March 20-21, 2018**
Certified Treecare Safety Professional/CTSP Workshop
Windsor, CT
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**March 24-27, 2018**
ISA Southern Chapter Annual Conference
Memphis, TN
Contact: www.ISASouthern.org

**April 3-4, 2018**
TCIA Executive Arborist Workshop
Doral Arrowwood Resort, Rye Brook, NY
Contact: www.tcia.org/events

**April 18-19, 2018**
Certified Treecare Safety Professional/CTSP Workshop
Vacaville, CA
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

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**What’s Coming in TCI?**

Each issue of *TCI Magazine* contains a variety of articles tailored to the specific needs, concerns and interests of arborists. *TCI* solicits a number of articles from outside writers to keep its editorial content fresh. Do you have a story for *TCI*? The editor will be happy to review your idea or manuscript and discuss it with you. Here are some of the upcoming topics for the next two issues:

**FEBRUARY: The GREEN Issue**
- Machinery & Equipment: Right-of-Way Equipment, Wood Processing/Biofuel/Mulch
- Tools & Supplies: Biological Soil Amendments & Pest Management
- Services: Sustainable Operations/Practices
- Safety: Pesticide, Safety

**MARCH**
- Machinery & Equipment: Log Loaders/Skid Steers
- Tools & Supplies: Chain Saws, Seasonal Checklist
- Services: Insurance
- Safety: Crane Best Practices, CEU Quiz

Contact editor@tcia.org

Advertising opportunities: Sachin Mohan, smohan@tcia.org

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More almanac online! For the most up-to-date calendar information, visit www.tcia.org → events → industry-calendar

Send almanac listings to editor@tcia.org, or post them yourself on TCIA’s Industry Calendar – follow the directions above.
Washington in Review

By Peter Gerstenberger

REMINDER: Electronic Reporting is Here

OSHA extended the date by which employers were to electronically report injury and illness data through the Injury Tracking Application (ITA) to December 15, 2017. If you have not done it and fall into one of the following categories, you’d best get to it:

- Establishments with 250 or more employees must electronically submit information from OSHA Forms 300 (Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses), 300A (Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses) and 301 (Injury and Illness Incident Report).
- Establishments with 20-249 employees in certain industries with historically high rates of occupational injuries and illnesses must electronically submit information from OSHA Form 300A.
- Commercial Arborists are assigned the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) code of 561730. All establishments in the broader class code 5617, Services to Buildings and Dwellings, are swept up in this requirement.

Many OSHA-approved State Plans have not yet adopted the requirement to submit injury and illness reports electronically.

Tree care and landscaping establishments in California, Maryland, Minnesota, South Carolina, Utah, Washington and Wyoming are not currently required to submit their summary data through the ITA.

OSHA is reviewing the other provisions of its final rule to improve tracking of workplace injuries and illnesses, and intends to publish a notice of proposed rulemaking to reconsider, revise or remove portions of that rule in 2018.

Peter Gerstenberger is TCIA’s senior advisor for safety, compliance & standards.

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**Indicates that TCIA staff will be in attendance**

**Susan Harwood Grant-funded workshop; does not include lunch**

**ASTI grant supported workshop**

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**April 23-26, 2018**
Western Chapter ISA Annual Conference
Santa Rosa, CA
Contact: www.WCISA.net

**May 31, 2018**
Plant Health Care Workshop
The Morton Arboretum, Chicago, IL
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**June 29, 2018**
Plant Health Care Workshop
San Diego Botanic Garden, San Diego, CA
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**July 12, 2018**
Plant Health Care Workshop
Massachusetts Horticulture Center, Boston, MA
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**August 9, 2018**
Plant Health Care Workshop
Cleveland Botanic Garden, Cleveland, OH
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**August 15-16, 2018**
Certified Treecare Safety Professional/CTSP Workshop
Grand Prairie, TX
Contact: www.tcia.org/training

**November 8-10, 2018**
TCI EXPO
Pre-conference Workshops November 7
Charlotte, NC
Contact: 1-800-733-2622; www.tcia.org

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We’re heading to Memphis and look forward to seeing you there!

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By John Ball, Ph.D., CTSP

Everyone knows that you need to wear cut-resistant pants while operating chain saws on the ground, but almost any professional arborist can be caught not doing so at some point. When? Certainly not while felling a tree. Everyone knows that PPE is an OSHA requirement, part of the ANSI standards and makes good sense. But we might ignore all this for just a second while we make that one quick cut. A limb about to be chipped has a long side branch attached that makes it awkward for the crew to chip, so you just walk over, grab the saw and quickly make the cut. You are only making one cut, what could go wrong?

Likewise, we all know that you wear fallprotection when operating an aerial lift. But we tend to forget this safety requirement when we have to fly back up for just a minute – to retrieve the forgotten pole pruner or free that cut branch that was left in the tree. “I am only going to be up there for a moment, what could go wrong?”

These lapses of judgement are not due to complacency, the smug feeling of invincibility that comes with working for years without an incident. This feeling tends to be the prerogative of the older arborists, ones who have practiced their trade for decades without even a scratch to show for it. “You don’t need to worry about sticking your hand too close to the in-feed while clearing that jam. I never worry about it and I am still here.” That’s their common boast until that moment they are swept through the chipper after pushing a jammed branch in with their hand. Older arborists (such as myself) have to watch out for complacency.

It’s also not due to overconfidence, the bane of the younger arborists who already know more than the veterans since they have been in the field for at least a year...
or two and have watched a lot of YouTube videos of awesome tree work. They don’t need to follow safety rules. They are faster, smarter and tougher than those other arborists. Rules are for slower, dumber workers, not them.

Some research disputes this notion that the younger worker is more overconfident than the older worker, instead suggesting they are just more risk tolerant. But either way, their belief is that rules are made for others.

Instead, these momentary lapses of reason (my apologies to other Pink Floyd fans) are more insidious and are frustrating for those trying to manage risk. Hazard sources can be avoided, eliminated or minimized. For example, we eliminate the electric hazard to aerial-lift operators and climbers by engineering it out of the system, i.e., placing conductors underground rather than within the canopies of trees. We avoid hazards through barriers of space and time, the use of minimal-approach distances from conductors based on voltages and climber/operator qualifications. We minimize hazards by training workers how to safely work near electrical hazards, but the hazards are still there and we are working with people. People are fallible, and fallibility can only be moderated, not eliminated.

Until we engineer the worker out of tree work – a heavy-lift, laser-mounted drone operated by an “arbor-pilot” sitting back in the office in a chair with a joy stick and a cup holder – we are going to deal with human failures.

In high-risk occupations such as arboriculture, we have to be mindful of two types of failures: execution failures and planning failures.

Planning failures are either due to an absence of rules or not knowing the rules. We have lots of rules – “shall” and “should” – in the ANSI Z133 standard. This consensus standard covers the array of hazard sources and sets guidelines to avoid, eliminate or minimize them. Everyone should know these guidelines, and the new edition just came out (November 2017), so it’s a good time to update your understanding of the standard. Every tree care company can afford the cost of obtaining a copy or two of the “Z” and the time to review them with the crew during a tailgate session or work meeting. Not knowing the Z133 is no excuse for an incident.

Execution failures are when we ignore the rules either willfully or through absentmindedness. The willful ones can be traced back to complacency or overconfidence, but the ones where you just forgot – those are the lapses and slips. Not too surprisingly, these do not occur when we are doing non-routine functions, such as
the removal of a huge oak tucked in a tiny courtyard. No, rather, these occur during routine tasks when your mind seems to be operating on automatic. This is when you commit some error that you cannot believe you would do – “Cutting on the ground without chaps, that’s what the ‘other guy’ does!”

While it’s easy to blame these lapses entirely on the worker, we do not work in isolation. These lapses are dependent not only on the preoccupation of the worker or distractions, but on the working environment, the safety culture of the company.

Where you work and who you work with plays a large part as to whether these lapses have consequences. Anyone ever fly a lift, complete the work, cradle the boom and then notice your fall-arrest lanyard was left clipped to your chest or shoulder straps? Sure you were distracted, maybe focusing too much on the work you were about to fly up to start, but why didn’t anyone else notice this lapse? You cannot take the ‘T’ out of tree work; it’s a “Team” activity. We are not only responsible for ourselves, but also for everyone else on the crew.

A team approach is essential to improving safety in the tree care industry. Designing systems to avoid or eliminate risk does not solve execution failures – sometimes it just shifts the risk. Instead, training and encouraging workers to act as a team can produce incredible benefits at a relatively low cost. This is behavior-based safety that goes beyond engineering controls and regulations. It is qualitative, focused on behavior, rather than quantitative, focused on the number of incidents.

Behavior-based safety is a team approach and only works if everyone is committed to safety. It breaks down when fellow workers allow someone’s momentary lapses to go unnoticed and uncorrected. When you see another crew member walk over to make that quick cut while not wearing any PPE, are you comfortable with reminding him or her to stop and gear up? An environment where small lapses are not caught and corrected, but instead are allowed to continue, is an environment where risky behavior is more than tolerated, it’s accepted as part of the work.

Instead, everyone on the crew must truly be willing to be their brother’s (and sister’s) keeper and point out lapses. And everyone has to be able to accept others catching these lapses as concern for the common good rather than a negative reflection on them.

General Norman Schwarzkopf wrote, “The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it.” We need to work on the hard part – every job, every day.

Dr. John Ball, CTSP, is professor of forestry at South Dakota State University and a Board Certified Master Arborist.
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A Wisconsin Badgers player tries, unsuccessfully, to break up a Hail Mary pass thrown on the last play of a game against the Michigan State Spartans. “It wasn’t the final play that won the game. It was the plays that led up to the team getting back into the game and being in a position to make the final play,” says the author.

Photo by Matt Radick at Flickr.

By Donny Coffey, CTSP

I recently was given the opportunity to coach my seven-year-old son’s soccer team. While preparing for the weekly games, it became apparent that my full-time profession as an arborist and my part-time coaching roles had very similar responsibilities. Not surprisingly, our morning safety discussions were littered with analogies based on my son’s prior games and practices.

Situational awareness, as defined by Wikipedia, is the perception of environmental elements and events with respect to time or space, the comprehension of their meaning and the projection of their status after some variable has changed – such as time or some other variable, such as a predetermined event.

Whether you are on the field dismantling defenses or in the field dismantling trees, your awareness of your job, surroundings and team members and how you adapt to each plays a significant role in the success and safety of your operation. Let’s look at some comparisons.

Drafting

Listen to any NFL media outlet in April and you will be inundated by Wonderlic scores, 40-yard-dash times and countless other individual statistics – the keyword being “individual.” What these numbers cannot measure is the ability of the individual to interact with the current team members and form a cohesive, productive and safe unit.

When it is time to hire new employees, take as much time as needed to make sure you are “drafting” the right individual for your team. Working interviews, ride-alongs and interviews led by the crew leaders are all great tools that can be used to ensure you get the appropriate person for that role. The more time and information you can acquire will pay dividends for your operation and your crew members.

Studying film

Successful teams spend just as much time in the film room as they do on the field. They are not rushing around the morning of game day trying to figure out the plan for that opponent. Proper planning should not begin when you arrive at your shop that morning. Preparations should be made when the crew returns from the job site the day before. A proper debriefing of that day’s work and a briefing of the next
day's operations should occur. Feeling rushed the morning of the job can lead to misinterpreted information, wrong directions, forgotten equipment and a tendency to not focus while driving to the job site.

**Timeouts**

How many times have we seen coaches and teams holding onto that one last timeout so they can call the right play, make the proper adjustments, switch personnel or just ice the kicker. Timeouts in organized sports can be the golden ticket. When used wisely, they are very effective in controlling the flow of the game and minimizing mistakes.

Within arboriculture, we are fortunate that we are not given a set allotment of timeouts. We have the ability at any given time during the operation to stop, slow down and evaluate decisions that are critical. It is very important to know when to take timeouts. Confused looks on crew members’ faces, fatigue during extreme weather patterns and before the first pick of a crane-assisted removal or taking the top out or rigging a large section are all good times to sit back and evaluate.

**Shift in momentum**

Momentum shifts in organized sports can be simply defined as one team doing things well and consistently, when the other team either makes mistakes or does not execute properly.

Compare this to the “flow” of the work in the field. Flow is very important in the efficiency of moving products from the tree or backyard to waiting equipment. Tree climbers also experience flow or shifts in momentum when the plan either works or doesn’t work in the canopy. Many times the scope of work at the job site determines the flow. Location of the trees, terrain, setup of the equipment and experience of the crew members all play a huge factor in the flow of on-site operations. As discussed earlier, briefings with the arborist representative and foreperson before the job will help with the efficiency and flow of the project.

**Managing the sidelines**

The purpose of sidelines/end lines in organized sports is to delineate the field of play or where the activities will take place.

Don’t let the unpredictable events back into the game.
Stay on point from when you leave your home in the morning until you arrive back home safely. Don’t let your defense down on that last cut or hooking up the chipper at the end of the job.

Spectators are not allowed on the field until all activity/operations cease. The participants, when on the field, must wear safety equipment. Play stops when someone goes beyond those boundaries. Are you beginning to see the similarities within arboricultural operations?

A proper job-site setup should have boundaries set up so that pedestrians, homeowners and bystanders are not in the field of operations. Whenever crew members enter or exit the field, they shall be required to wear all appropriate PPE. As the job site’s activity moves, so should the sidelines. Remember, this is your field, and you have a right to restrict access to that field based on the operations being conducted. You are the coach and referee.

**“Hail Mary”**

Roger Staubach coined the term “Hail Mary” back in 1975 after the Dallas Cowboys’ win over the Minnesota Vikings. During the post-game interviews, Staubach was asked about the final play. Being a devout Roman Catholic, Staubach said, “I just closed my eyes and said a Hail Mary.” Now let’s imagine being on the receiving end of that last heroic play. You played a hard-fought game for 59 minutes and 59 seconds only to have the game hinge on one play. Wouldn’t it have been nice to just cruise into the final minutes with the game in hand? It wasn’t the final play that won the game. It was the plays that led up to the team getting back into the game and being in a position to make the final play.

Throughout my career in arboriculture, I have tried to instill three phrases into my crews: “Gravity never takes a day off,” “Electricity is opportunistic” and “If you have any doubt, there’s no doubt.”

Do not let your guard down. We are in one of the most deadly professions in the world. Don’t let the unpredictable events back into the game. Stay on point from when you leave your home in the morning until you arrive back home safely. Don’t let your defense down on that last cut or hooking up the chipper at the end of the job.

**“On an island”**

This phrase commonly refers to when a defensive back is matched up one-on-one with the opposing wide receiver. The defensive back will have no help from a safety or another person, hence the feeling of being on a secluded island by himself.

Up until now, we have been discussing situations involving multiple crew members working on a specific site. Let’s switch gears and think about a plant health care technician (PHCT). Many organizations will have only one PHCT in a vehicle at a time visiting multiple sites on any given day. If anyone were on an island, it would be these technicians. They do not have a co-pilot when traveling to and from destinations. They are in charge of their own safety while on the job site, mixing material and maneuvering through tight neighborhoods. Providing these folks with all available safety features will greatly increase their safety and efficiency. For example, back-up cameras, easy access when climbing up and down the rig to mixed material and GPS units are all great additions to their rig.

So you may ask, how do you train your crew on situational awareness? There is no magic potion or spell to cast over the crew. It is a combination of gathering information, distributing that information, using that information and applying it to various situations. There is no “certificate of completion” for awareness training. There is no program with a finite end. It’s about everyone being vested in your operation and all of its members from the minute they are hired until they are no longer there.

Donny Coffey, CTSP, is safety and training coordinator/senior field team leader with Cutting Edge Tree Professionals, LLC, an accredited TCIA member company located in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania.

TREEmaking, Pennsylvania.
We all know the definition of training is teaching, or developing in oneself or others, any skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies. There are numerous methods and materials available to help prepare your new employees to do their jobs better. The only problem is determining the best new-employee training methods and techniques.

While some new-employee training techniques are more cost-effective than others, you want to use the best options that will best prepare your new employees with various skills and accommodate different learning styles. Well-trained new employees are happy, engaged, productive – and they will eat, sleep and breathe your company if you ask them to.

I know employee training isn’t cheap, but I also know that the positive impacts are worth every penny. How important is training? Well, I was surprised by this excerpt from an article I read regarding the fairly recent U.S. Navy ship collisions in the Pacific: “The Navy is still investigating four accidents involving ships in the Pacific this year – accidents that led to the deaths of 17 sailors and untold millions of dollars in repairs. So, what happened? Some naval experts are pointing to overworked crews and to the stress of frequent deployments because of too few ships. But as NPR’s Tom Bowman reports, others point to a simpler reason – lack of training.” (Source: NPR Tom Bowman Interview)

As a Navy veteran, this is not what I recollect from 30-plus years ago – we trained day and night! So, how can the greatest Navy in the world identify lack of training as the root cause that led to these collisions? Are we, in the tree care industry, delivering effective and quality training to avoid a “collision” in the field that can produce an unwanted event, an injury or, worse, a fatality?

I once had a Navy chief engineer say to me, “The training you receive or conduct must be pertinent to the mission and foster perfect execution of every task, every day and by every person. Training begins on day one and continues until the trainee has mastered the desired skill, therefore eliminating error.”

The importance of new-employee training is invaluable for your business. New-employee training must start on day one of employment. An effective new-employee training program ensures that new hires are prepared in their new positions, giving them confidence and the resources they need to meet your “Mission” as a company.

However, have you ever heard complaints that new-employee training is overwhelming or boring, or that the new employee is left to sink or swim? Or that new employees feel as if the company dumped too much information on them that they were supposed to understand and imple-
ment in much too short a time? We did!

So, we conducted an audit to determine if we had effective knowledge transfer: Is it practical (the what, how and why)? Is there repetition? Is the message consistent?

There’s a huge difference between the knowledge of something and the skills needed to actually do that something. The audit revealed we had gaps in three areas: Practical, Repetition and Consistent Message.

So we needed to change our methods of delivery because we were not meeting our “Mission” as a company.

New-employee training should have at least two components: Classroom time and work-site time. The classroom portion should be a mix of video, PowerPoint and demonstrations to capture the interest of new employees so they get off to a good start.

Both components need the following:

**Make it Practical** – Training should have practical content, and content is only practical when it helps employees know what to do and how to do it, and why it should be done that way. Getting employees involved will prompt action and behavioral change, and that is the purpose of training.

**Restate it with Repetition** – One exposure to a new concept isn’t enough. Employees need repetition in order to be successful when they perform the task in their work setting. At first, employees become aware of “it”; employees now know the “it” exists and they try the “it.” The ultimate goal is reached when the employee unconsciously applies the concept, therefore attaining the skill.

**Insure a Consistent Message** – The training messages that are given when training employees must be consistent with all who train. Each employee or group of employees should hear or read the same message to avoid confusion, because confusion inhibits the action required to change behavior.

Using the criteria listed above for an effective new-employee training program is a great way to evaluate your training program. As with anything that is done well, your new-employee training must follow a plan. An effective new-employee training program lays out a “road map,” as we call it, so that each skill level fits the “Mission” of the company and the new employees’ development needs. When a new-employee training program is meaningful, new employees feel valued and appreciated. In an unstructured training program, you don’t really have a way to measure whether the time and money spent on training produced noticeable gains in employees’ ability to perform their tasks.

To grow your employees’ skills, you need the ability to measure outcomes of training so you can make improvements and adjustments over time (we use a multiple-choice test). If a training section of new-employee training doesn’t produce desired results, you will need to modify it. Like all your work, a new-employee training program should be dynamic, constantly changing to improve its success and meet the evolving needs of your company. Remember the “Mission.” The way you assure this dynamism is through regular, careful examination and evaluation of what you’re doing and how you’re do it.

Finally, the in-the-field (on-the-work-site) portion of new-employee training utilizes the same criteria and is now actually doing that something. Use as much hands-on training as possible. The most effective new-employee training uses all the senses to affect learning. Demonstrate and relate teaching points to create a greater understanding and knowledge of the subject that was covered in the classroom.

Remember, the in-the-field new-employee training must be Practical, must include Repetition and must deliver a Consistent Message. Use a checklist to stay on track. Evaluate the in-field training as you go. Always look for what works best. When you encounter a new technique or method that clicks with the participant, document it on your training materials so it can be incorporated into the training plan to be used in future sessions. All training should be a positive experience that produces results to meet the “Mission” of the company!

**Gerry Breton, CTSP,** is safety director with Lucas Tree Expert Co., Inc., a residential/commercial- and utility contractor-accredited, 37-year TCIA member company based in Portland, Maine.
Training Special Focus

The Simple Things?

By Todd Kramer, CTSP

The tree care industry brings us very diverse work, with assignments from the very simple to the very complex. One day we are structural pruning very small trees, and the next day we may be removing large dead trees over many obstacles. During my 29 years working in this industry, we have had many improvements in equipment and techniques, making the work often physically easier and more efficient. We are getting more work done every day than we did in the past.

With these improvements in equipment and techniques, one would think that our industry’s incident and injury rates would be declining. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Looking at TCIA’s monthly incident report or listening to Dr. John Ball talk about incidents and injuries in our industry, it seems this is not improving.

In our organization, we see a number of incidents every year. All of these incidents are investigated in an attempt to determine a root cause, “Why did this happen?” Was it a lack of training for the field staff, lack of communication from sales or management, a lack of training for sales and management, a lack of communication from the crew leader or a combination of all of these things?

With all of our incidents, there are very few that are “not at fault,” although those do happen. A few may have had circumstances that were out of our control, but honestly, not very many. Every quarter we review all of our incidents in every department and look for trends. Most of our incidents are happening on routine work that is not very challenging. Why is this?

During an aerial-rescue training session this year, I had a very good discussion with one of our crews. We were discussing what type of aerial rescue to practice that day – a spar rescue, a redirected rescue, a confined-space rescue, a static rescue or just a simple, basic rescue. The crew opted for a basic rescue. These are pretty simple to do and don’t really challenge a crew member. This led to more discussion, as I was just assuming the crew was feeling a bit lazy and didn’t want to get into difficult climbing/rescue during this training event. I led the discussion to emphasize the importance of practicing the more complex rescues, because it was my opinion that these are the situations where we are more exposed to an injury or incident. The crew disagreed.

The crew took over the discussion, making the point that they felt they were at more risk while doing the more routine, easier work. While performing the more challenging work, they felt they were switched on. Their level of focus was much higher, their communication skills were improved and that all of this was due to the fact that the consequence of a failure is much higher. We took this discussion to the next step.

Even a seemingly simple job can get complicated quickly, especially without the right crew and the right tools. Courtesy of the author.

The ANSI Z133 requires that the third, or hinged, leg of a tripod/orchard ladder be braced or fastened when on hard or slick surfaces. ANSI also requires, when feasible, that the worker on the ladder be tied into the tree. TC1 file photo.
I agreed with the crew that their level of focus is increased during complex or high-risk jobs. I also asked the question of why most of our incidents are, generally, during very routine, simple work? That’s when the discussion sort of fizzled away, not surprisingly. The conclusion of this training day lead to quite productive conversations. They defiantly agreed that they have a reduced lack of communication and focus on routine work. They also mentioned that some work looks routine on paper, but when they get to the actual job, it can be a different story.

We all know tree crews have a knack for getting work done. If they don’t have the right equipment or competent people on the job site, they often will simply try to get the work done with who and what they have. This is not the best idea and is where a culture of open communication is very important. If the crew felt they would get push-back from management, this leads to a culture of “just get it done,” potentially leading to incidents or injuries.

One example they gave was a two-man job of simply shaping some arborvitae. All they needed was a stepladder and some hedge trimmers. Turns out the arborvitae were too tall, and the workers put themselves at risk in an attempt to get the job done. This is where the importance of planning on the front end is very important and communication among the crew is crucial.

Another example is from an organization in the Northeast. They have many full-time seasonal workers and their summer/busy season seems to go really well with few incidents. As the winter months come and the seasonal crews are no longer there, their incident rate increases. The full-time, year-round crews are all seasoned veterans and most are crew leaders. Now they have the most skilled and experienced staff all working together, yet their incident rate increases. Why is this?

The work we do is very diverse, and the people we do it with can be as well. When we are assuming we have the confidence of the staff around us, we may become complacent and lose focus. If our work is not properly planned before we get there and the crew has an attitude of “we must get this done,” even if we don’t have the proper equipment or competent people with which to do it, this could lead to incidents and injuries.

We need to treat every task with the same importance, whether it’s simple or complex. Communication from management, sales personnel and crew leaders needs to be thorough and open for discussion and questions. Balancing all of this could lead to jobs being completed with high quality and good productivity while also doing a better job of managing safety.

Todd Kramer, CTSP, is director of field operations/education for Kramer Tree Specialists, Inc., an accredited, 30-year TCIA member company based in West Chicago, Illinois.
There has been an ongoing debate concerning the effect of accidents and incidents on workers and companies, tied back to the cost of safety programs and incident prevention. Traditionally, most people had the view that preventing accidents and the program itself were too costly. Now we see that incidents and accidents are costly and that prevention makes the most sense economically. What this means is that your program has now been justified economically and not just from a moral or ethical perspective.

Traditionally, safety programs focus on the accident or the resulting injury or damage. The issue with this type of program is that it only focuses on the last domino before the incident or accident occurred. My definition of an incident is a situation that can be prevented, while an accident is classified as an “Act of God.”

Herbert Heinrich was an official with the Travelers Insurance Company in the late 1920s. Heinrich’s work is known today as the Domino Theory. This theory is about injuries or property damage from a series of completed factors, including the actual incident or accident itself. If you think about dominoes, tipping over the first one causes an excessive toppling from one to the next.

Our goal as safety professionals is to remove the dominoes before an incident occurs. Through identifying your leading-indicator chronic defects, you will remove these dangerous dominoes. Who would have thought that playing a game of dominoes could truly be a matter of life and death?

If you ask your employees what your safety program consists of, what would they say? Are they able to clearly articulate what the program is? In my case, when I asked that question three years ago, the answer was surprising. Most employees could not list more than two or three initiatives, when there were more than 25. Some of these initiatives have been around for more than 30 years, so how was it possible that at the field level they did not know this? It was at this moment that I realized we needed to bring our safety program into the spotlight and start over. What I mean by starting over is going back to the basics to make sure the very building blocks of incident prevention are in place.

Examples of leading indicators include wearing proper PPE and employing fall protection. Failure to use those items would be a leading-indicator defect. Here, a Marquis Tree Service lift operator puts on his fall protection during a Massachusetts Arborists Association 2017 Arbor Day event in Boston. TCIA photo by Richard May.

By Nick Bomber, CTSP

Do you know what your company’s leading-indicator chronic defects are?

Before you answer that question, let’s first understand the definition. A leading indicator is a measure preceding a future event used to drive activities carried out to prevent and control injury or damage to a property. Some examples are: PPE being used, two hands on a chain saw, proper parking procedures, backing up with a spotter and establishing a critical drop zone.

Chronic defects are when you can identify leading indicators that are not being followed by a number (more than one) of people, crews or branches. An example would be going out to check on two of your general tree care crews and seeing that they are not establishing a critical drop zone using cones or other means. When you see that two of your crews are not following this initiative, you have identified a chronic defect.

By identifying this, you can now put countermeasures in place that could be engineering, education or just enforcement.
What should the frequency of my crew-safety audits be?

When it comes to the frequency of performing your crew-safety audits, I can only share with you what we do. Your frequency may have to be higher in the beginning until you gain traction with this initiative. Our current process requires every crew to be audited two times per quarter throughout the year. This gives us eight official audits annually of every crew that works in the company. This does not include the times you stop by to help out or deal with a customer issue. This is an official audit of their performance and adherence to the safety initiatives designed to keep employees and property safe. I would start off by asking the people being audited what the frequency should be from their perspective, which will get them bought into the process.

What do you do after the crew-safety audit?

The action you take after performing the crew-safety audit can be more important than performing the audit itself. This is where you are going to actually change an individual or crew behavior by what you do or say. We all know that changing someone’s behavior can be one of the most challenging tasks we are faced with as a manager. So what is the best way? I do not think there is one answer, but several.

After you perform the audit, give a copy of it to the crew leader for his or her records, as the crew leader is the one responsible for what happens on that job. You will be surprised that many will bring this home and show their family and friends. If the family is aware that a defect was found, they can help make sure that behavior is corrected because they do not want anything to happen to them. Posting the results is also a good way to change behavior, because you are compared to your peers. Most of us are competitive by nature, and this is a good way to focus that energy.

Lastly, because the audit is a scoring system, you can grade them. One manager I work with is rewarding the service line with the highest percentage of leading indicators, which keep people and property safe. Rewarding that particular group with a safety breakfast also can help with competition in a positive way.

When you start using leading indicators as a measure of your safety performance, you will start to see small improvements as time goes on. Each improvement changes the overall safety culture in a positive way. You need to take your time with building a safety culture as most are measured over a five-year timeframe.

As a manager, one of the easiest ways to change behavior is to focus on what your team members are doing right. By acknowledging that someone is performing certain safety initiatives correctly, you can reinforce this behavior in a positive way. Once you have laid out all of the leading indicators, you will have set a clear path for what your team members should be doing on a daily basis.

If you answered no to “Do you know what your company’s leading-indicator chronic defects are?” then you have a hole in your safety program. We know that incident prevention is a combination of many initiatives. There are no silver bullets in regard to keeping people and property safe. Rather, it is a combination of many safety initiatives and your overall safety culture.

One of the leading causes of incidents and accidents in the working environment oftentimes is management failing to do its part to make the environment safe to work in. When management allows unsafe acts, conditions or procedures to be ignored, this sends a message that safety is not important. I believe safety is a value and not a priority. Priorities can change from one day to the next and a value is constant. Have safety, quality and productivity as values instead of priorities.

Nick Bomber, CTSP, is safety, training and general tree care director at SavATree, a 31-year TCIA member company based in Bedford Hills, New York.
By Bill Owen, CTSP

It has been said, in various ways, that teaching is the best way to learn. As a trainer, I have found that to be true. While preparing to teach the new Crew Leader Qualification Workshop at TCI EXPO 2017 in Columbus, Ohio, I was able to learn about leadership from a program that is unique for our industry. Additionally, I had an opportunity to work with, and learn from, some of the best trainers in the industry.

Preparing to teach for TCIA’s first offering of its new Crew Leader Qualification Workshop involved following all the same steps students must take in order to pass the course. Additionally, I had to pass the exam at a high level and practice teaching the course with a group of my peers. For this reason, I achieved a deeper understanding of the key concepts covered in the course.

During the “alpha” version of the workshop, all the instructor candidates practiced teaching the workshop together and evaluated the content. The purpose of the “alpha” was to practice and evaluate prior to the “beta” at EXPO. Because I agreed to be an instructor for the “beta,” I had to prepare myself to teach real students, not my peers. Once the content was finalized, I had to learn the material in enough depth to feel comfortable teaching it in the workshop.

As TCI EXPO approached, I finalized my preparations for teaching the course. During that process, I realized that the Crew Leader Qualification program provided instruction on many of the leadership skills that I had worked to develop on my own. For example, a central theme of the program is the difference between hard and soft skills. The difference lies in the boundary between technical skills and people skills. The Crew Leader Qualification program is unique in that it places an emphasis on developing the people skills needed to be an effective crew leader.

As I discovered on my own, it is a tremendous challenge to shift from being self-oriented to other-oriented. Early in my career, I had learned the skills needed to become a high-performance individual. When I assumed a leadership role, success was measured not only by my performance, but in the performance of those I led. It was much more challenging for me to help others achieve high levels of performance or to build a high-performance team. In this way, this realization taught me that success is not just about technical skill, it’s about people skills.

Specifically, most arborists are technical experts because of years of practice developing technical skills. Notwithstanding technical expertise, one might still struggle in dealing with people. For example, most arborists would not object to being called a “tree person.” It is rarer to find an arborist who is a self-described “people person.” In my experience as an arborist, the solitude I felt while working in the trees was what made the work so attractive to me. The reality is that most practicing arborists work in teams and deal with all types of people on a daily basis. As such, being an arborist who is both a “tree person” and a “people person” is a crucial aspect of success in the industry.
The Crew Leader Qualification program teaches tree workers the people skills they need to bring out the best in others and build high-performance teams. Specifically, the program is designed for individuals transitioning into a crew-leader role. Additionally, experienced crew leaders and individuals working toward becoming a crew leader would also benefit from the program.

The one-day course consists of facilitated instruction from a qualified trainer, nine guided activities to practice the skills and a multiple-choice test to verify understanding. Key leadership skills are presented in training modules that consist of instruction and guided practice activities. Along with covering the conceptual material, the instructors guide participants through group exercises that relate to the concepts. In most cases, participants actively practice the soft skills covered in the course.

Throughout my involvement in the Crew Leader Qualification program, I expanded my understanding of the soft skills covered in the course. By teaching in both the “alpha” and the “beta,” I fine-tuned some of the leadership skills that I had worked so hard to develop. Specifically, it was an exciting opportunity to work with some truly talented trainers. While watching other trainers teach portions of the course, I learned some different approaches to presenting the content. For me, it reinforced the idea that delivery is just as important as the content.

As such, I recognized some opportunities to improve my delivery by watching others. It also reminded me of an important fact in regard to interpersonal relationships. When considering what is most memorable about interactions with other people, most people remember a feeling. That is to say, if people remember anything about a person, it is how that person made them feel. This is an important consideration when learning how to interact with and influence other people.

During the “alpha” phase, the course modules were split up between the instructor candidates. During this portion, I covered the Leadership module. One key leadership skill the module teaches is effective delegation. Good leaders delegate by setting clear expectations and providing a vision. It has been said that there is no decision without a vision.

To me, this means that if people do not see a purpose in the task they are performing, they will rarely perform the task well, if at all. In this way, the leader provides a sense of purpose by creating a vision for the worker. Oftentimes, this is simply a matter of providing a little context as to why the task is important and how it fits into the bigger picture. In most cases, when a leader conveys a compelling vision, expectations are well understood by all.

The first activity in the Leadership module is a leadership self-assessment. The assessment is designed to help the participants develop self-awareness, which is a crucial skill for effective leadership. By rating the frequency of key leadership behaviors, a thoughtful participant can use the assessment to identify areas for improvement.

During the “beta” at EXPO, I covered two modules, Quality Control (QC) and Professionalism, as well as Communication. A key concept of the QC and Professionalism module relates to presenting a positive, professional image. Doing this involves aspects of appearance, behavior and habits. In this way, the module teaches participants how to present a positive image by having groups of trainees illustrate “do” and “don’t” topics. By illustrating good and bad aspects of appearance, behavior and habits, the group learns what to do and what not to do. This exercise is important because some people can’t explain what a professional image looks like until they see what it doesn’t look like.

Module four of the course covers Communication. Although communication with crew members is extensively covered in other modules, crew leaders should keep in mind that communication occurs on many different levels in tree work. Crew leaders must deal with clients,
the public at large and sometimes the media. Additionally, crew leaders must communicate with colleagues and managers within their organization. As such, the workshop teaches the “tree person” to be a “people person” by emphasizing the importance of communication in these areas. The course helps us all understand that sometimes “It’s not what you say, but how you say it.” Accordingly, people often remember the tone of a message much longer than they remember the actual content of a message.

The activity associated with the Communication module helps illustrate this. The exercise helps participants practice proper communication with clients. The group activity centers around a common theme in residential tree care – minor property damage. Although a broken flower pot or trampled flowers may be perceived as a minor issue by the crew leader, it is important to remember that some items have sentimental value despite their cost. Appropriately, there is a “good” way to resolve the issue and a “not good” way. In either case, the damage might be acknowledged and repaired. The “good” way to do it is with sensitivity to the feelings and concerns of the client. The “not good” way is to offer a remedy while acting defensively and dismissively.

Although other important modules relating to crew leader skills are covered in the workshop, an interesting aspect of the course is that many of the skills and concepts overlap one another. For example, as I studied the content, I wondered to myself where the Leadership module ended and the Communication module began. Given that leaders communicate in order to influence people in a positive way, the two top-ics inevitably overlap. Many of the other modules overlap and build on one another in a similar way.

The reason for this is because dealing with people is complicated. There is no single technique or method that will work for every person. As such, a skilled crew leader understands the importance of approaching every person differently, as an individual. Doing so requires a completely different skill set than technical tree climbing. In this way, the course helps us all become better at dealing with all the people involved in our work with the trees.

Bill Owen, CTSP, is director of safety and fleet for Arborwell, an accredited, 21-year TCIA member company headquartered in Hayward, California. He will be facilitating a CLQ workshop on February 22 in Hayward, Calif.
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By Patricia Chaudoin

Your passion for tree care began at an early age, and you decided to start your own business out of your home. You built your tree care company slowly and steadily over the years, and now your revenues are reflecting your commitment.

Then why do you feel like your team’s productivity is not all it could be? And why are you spending so many hours working hard and still feeling as if you’re in the same place you were five years ago? And why the heck haven’t you been able to take a vacation in recent memory?

If you’ve asked yourself these same questions, you aren’t alone. Many of your colleagues are experiencing the same growing pains, according to Mark Garvin, TCIA president. “These problems have been faced by hundreds of others in the tree care industry,” he says. “So we decided to create an event with the goal of helping smaller companies put management systems in place that will help them grow better and more efficiently.”

That event is the first-ever Executive Arborist Workshop, scheduled for April 3-4, 2018, at the Doral Arrowwood, a full-service resort in Rye Brook, New York. “We decided to call this a workshop,” notes Garvin, “to emphasize the hands-on nature of what we want to do here. You won’t just be sitting listening to a lawyer talk. You’ll be getting hands-on concepts you can incorporate and put to work right away.”

Garvin adds, “We’ve had a lot of feedback over the years from our smaller members who would look at the TCIA Winter Management Conference programs and see the value, but they couldn’t take a week off or spend the money to fly off to Hawaii or the Caribbean. And people attending TCIA EXPO, where the classes are only an hour-and-a-quarter, would say, ‘Great topic, but we need more time spent on it!’ What they really wanted was a couple of days of more concentrated courses with like-minded business owners who are in the same situation they are. And we wanted to make it easy and affordable for them to attend.”

Garvin emphasizes that the Executive Arborist Workshop will feature a heavier practitioners’ roster of speakers covering topics such as how to land commercial contracts, ways to develop new revenue sources and how to use personality profiles to hire the right people for the right jobs. Other topics include “Maximizing Efficiency & Operations,” “How to Design Awesome Marketing Materials” and “Professional Sales Techniques.” Each topic will be covered by an expert on the subject who has practiced what he or she preaches and seen bona fide results from his or her efforts.

Diane Morgan, TCIA’s director of meetings, says the location for this event was intentionally chosen for its proximity to major airports in New York and Connecticut – including Westchester County Airport outside White Plains, New York – as well as its convenient driving distances from East Coast cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, Hartford and Baltimore. She adds, “We realized that what we wanted was to have a very intensive business-owner workshop with speakers who are in the trade and who want to share their techniques and approaches for success.

“Our group rates at the Doral ($290/night single occupancy or $240/night double) include breakfast, lunch and dinner, so meals will become networking opportunities,” Morgan adds. “The speakers and TCIA managers will be there at meals as well, so the intention is that the dialogue continues in a more relaxed atmosphere with roundtable discussions. And it’s important to note that there will be fewer than 100 participants, so you are going to get a lot of attention.”

The cost of two full days of educational programs at the Executive Arborist Workshop is $395, with nine featured speakers. Participants staying at the Doral Arrowwood also can attend an opening dinner (included in the room rate) and casual networking opportunity with other attendees and TCIA staff on Monday evening, April 2, before the main workshop begins the next day. And, while the program specifically is designed to help tree care companies with revenues in the $750,000 to $2 million range, Morgan says there may be smaller businesses that also can benefit from the takeaways of the workshop. “The big thing is, this will give you skills for how to build your business,” she adds.

Garvin agrees, saying, “I think this workshop will fill a need. And now we’re looking at doing something similar in the Chicago area or on the West Coast.”

For the full workshop schedule, go to tcia.org/events and click on “TCIA Executive Arborist Workshop,” then click the link, “full schedule.” You’ll also find detailed information about the Doral Arrowwood and how to secure the group rate.
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TREE CARE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, Inc.
In January 2016, a total of 110 people attended two workshops funded through an Arborist Safety Training Institute (ASTI) grant, one for aerial rescue and the other for stationary-rope technique (SRT), held simultaneously in Windermere, Florida.

“People came from Alabama, Tampa,” says Danae Jackson, CTSP, an insurance agent with ArborMax and wife of Adam Jackson, the aerial-rescue workshop instructor. “One company brought its entire crew.”

Adam Jackson, CTSP, is a TCIA-approved instructor for aerial rescue, a Certified Tree Worker, a board member of the Florida ISA chapter and an arborist with The Davey Tree Expert Company in Apopka, Fla. Rich Hattier, an ISA-Certified Arborist and Certified Climber Specialist, led the SRT workshop.

“We tend to do informal training every year,” says Danae, who is also a TCIA-approved EHAP and chain saw instructor. “We did this one because the audience continues to grow. We wanted to set the standard higher and involve more people in training.”

The workshops wouldn’t have been possible without the (ASTI) grant, and many of the attendees wouldn’t have received the training without it, she says. Workshops offered by other organizations can be very expensive. Many employers don’t prioritize training or have the money for it. Some are old school and don’t use TCIA’s aerial-rescue safety protocols.

In addition to the grant, Adam Jackson received donations for the workshop from the Town of Windermere (Florida) Tree Board in the form of volunteers and meals for the attendees.

Danae handled the marketing, registration and administration. She also ensured that the attendees knew that the workshops were funded by ASTI and that more grants are available. She marketed the workshop by email and on the Geezers Tree Climbing Comp Facebook page.

“The Geezers group is geared for older guys to teach the younger generation climbing, and vice versa,” she says.

The two full-day workshops provided attendees with free training, a certificate of completion and TCIA’s “Aerial Rescue Training Program” or “SRT” manual. Adam began his aerial-rescue workshop with a video presentation from TCIA and by discussing TCIA’s aerial-rescue manual. Later, the attendees observed demonstrations by two climbers who used the rafters of the town hall building and the town hall grounds. Attendees then discussed different ways to assist in a rescue using TCIA’s aerial-rescue flowchart.

The Arborist Safety Training Institute (ASTI), run by the TCIA Foundation, is a program whose mission is to provide affordable safety training to tree care workers nationally. To date, donors have pledged more than $2 million to facilitate local, affordable safety training for arborists across the nation.

“The most important thing in the industry is to have opportunities to teach crews new ways of doing things, not just on a yearly basis but on a daily basis,” says Adam. “The ASTI program is an excellent way to present it to people, and the grant brings in people who normally wouldn’t get the training. It’s about being prepared for the inevitable. Having the opportunity to present the workshops is only going to make our industry better.”

To learn more about the ASTI program or to apply for an ASTI grant, contact Amy Tetreault at asti@tcia.org or phone (603) 314-5380.

This article was originally compiled as part of ASTI’s 2016 Annual Report and has been partly updated for use here.
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Arborist Safety Training Institute (ASTI) is seeking applications to fund safety training programs throughout the United States. Grants are available up to $1,500 plus the cost of workshop materials.*

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*ASTI grant funding is available for workshop materials up to $45/person.
We lost a great big piece of new business. A great big piece of business we should have won.

The relationship started really well. They were impressed with our outreach and our abilities. We had exquisite experience and were able to demonstrate the great results we had achieved for similar clients. Our ideas were spot on. And the presentation went as well as it could have. We were on fire.

But we still lost a great big piece of business.

The worst part? It was all my fault.

Do you want to know why?

We were meeting with the client after the pitch. They were blown away by our presentation and we were negotiating next steps. They were fine with our pricing and had no issues with the contract itself. They liked the people who would be working on their business. In fact, they were so pleased with the team that their CEO complimented me on assembling such a great group of professionals to work for them.

“Thanks,” I quipped. “With such great people working on your business, there’s almost nothing for me to do. And you know, I’m always willing to do less.”

The CEO stared at me, dumbfounded. Although I didn’t realize it at the time, everything went downhill from there.

Here’s the worst part – I was kidding.

I. Was. Kidding.

There was actually a lot of work for me to do. And I was very excited about doing it. But that little comment that I thought was so amusing – “I’m always willing to do less” – was exactly what our new client was worried about.

It turns out that the last firm they had worked with had apparently done a great presentation with talented senior level people, too. But after that they staffed the business with entry-level employees. They never delivered the work quality they had promised, and the client’s business suffered.

My new client was concerned that history was about to repeat itself.

Of course, I had no way of knowing that that was her concern, but ignorance is never an acceptable excuse. My attempt to be cute cost us a showcase client and a lot of money.

A while back I found a story online. I am not the original author, but I think an edited version is important enough to repeat here:

Two dogs walk into the same room at different times.

One comes out wagging his tail while the other comes out growling.

A woman watching all this goes into the room to see what could possibly make one dog so happy and the other so mad.

To her surprise, the room was filled with mirrors.

The happy dog found a thousand happy dogs looking back at him, while the angry dog saw only angry dogs growling back at him.

What you see in the world around you is a reflection of who you are.

I saw funny.

Our client saw lazy.

Who was correct doesn’t matter. We lost a great big piece of business.

I learned a lot about building and supporting my brand and my business.

I hope you did, too. Because building a great brand is not only about reinforcing your business offer. It’s about pre-inforcing your offer, too.

Bruce Turkel is a branding and advertising expert, an author and speaker who employs a combination of creativity and marketing to help his clients make their brands more valuable. He has created campaigns for American Express, Miami, Discovery Networks, Puerto Rico and Bacardi, and is a contributor on the Fox Business Channel and on MSN-BC, CNN, CBS and NPR. He’s authored five books on advertising (his latest: All About Them) and is currently finishing his next two.

Turkel will present on this same topic at TCIA’s Winter Management Conference 2018 in Maui, Hawaii, in February. For more information about WMC 2018 or to register, visit www.tcia.org.
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While He-Man Landscaping & Tree Service has plenty of equipment, they try to tread softly. “In Hawaii, people’s attitude is one of being one with ‘aina – the land,” says Peter Hehemann. “We try to be environmentally sensitive and to incorporate nature and bring Hawaiian culture into the work we do.” Photos courtesy of He-Man Landscaping & Tree Service.

By Janet Aird

Halaeakalā Mountain, a volcano that forms more than 75 percent of the Island of Maui, Hawaii, rises from sea level to more than 10,000 feet. It has seven different microclimates, which range from coastal to temperate to mountainous to tropical rainforest, says Peter Hehemann, co-owner and executive officer of He-Man Landscaping & Tree Service, based in Maui.

“You can have one microclimate that is desert-like, with only three to five inches of rain a year, and 15 miles away it is the second-wettest spot on the planet,” says Peter, a CTSP. He cares for trees in almost all of them.

In 1990, Peter’s brother, Tim, moved from Colorado to Hawaii. He started a landscape business with a very modest goal: to make some extra side money. “It took off,” says Tim, co-owner, Certified Arborist and also a CTSP. “I decided to start a tree care business in 1998, about the time Peter moved here. We bought a truck and chipper combination in Chicago and shipped it over.”

One of the first things the brothers did was join TCIA and ISA.

“We’re proud that we grew the company ourselves,” Peter says. “We broke into the market knowing virtually nobody and grew in an environment that is very competitive. Now there’s real recognition with our name, our brand and, most importantly, our service.”

He-Man Tree Service serves most of the island of Maui. Some 40 percent of their tree-work customers are residential. Their commercial customers include HOAs, office parks, hospitality complexes and golf courses. Sixty to 70 percent are along the coast.

“In Hawaii, people’s attitude is one of being one with ‘aina – the land,” Peter says. “We try to be environmentally sensitive and to incorporate nature and bring Hawaiian culture into the work we do. Our commitment is to the property, the health and wellbeing of the landscape. Our customers have embraced that with us.”

In pruning and trimming, crews consider aesthetics as well as the health of the trees. “A lot of our crew members are very artistic in the way they trim and maintain trees,” he says.

They tread lightly when it comes to treating trees for pests and diseases, which include the coconut rhinoceros beetle, white fly and rust. “There are options,” Peter says. “We’re pushing for organic. Chemicals are instant gratification for a lot of people.”

They do most of their tree fertilization when the landscape division fertilizes the lawns, with a blend that benefits both. They also do removals, usually because a tree has been planted...
too close to a house.

Because many property owners are only part-time residents of the island and tend not to be familiar with the trees on their property, He-Man does tree species identification. They also provide tree audits for larger properties that want to do proper fertilization and insect and disease treatments. These audits often lead to maintenance agreements.

“We have to earn their trust,” Peter says. “A key differentiator is that we don’t just
do what we say we’re going to do – we do more than that. We give true solutions and build relationships. Once we have a new customer, they’re essentially a customer for life.”

The relationships begin with the 60 crew members the company has in the field. He-Man hires and trains employees who have a passion for what they do, and that transfers to the services they provide to their customers, Peter says.

He-Man Landscaping & Tree Service earned TCIA Accreditation in June 2016. “Accreditation adds a lot of credibility to who and what you are,” Peter says. “We were the first accredited company in the state. We’re proud of that.”

It’s definitely been a positive for the company, Tim adds. “We have a tendency to do battle with three or four different tree services companies here. I bring up to potential customers that we’re accredited. People ask about it and I tell them what we do. We’ve been able to separate ourselves that way.”

There’s a fair amount that goes into becoming accredited, Peter says. Just thinking about all the requirements was daunting, but they discovered that they had a lot of the pieces in place already, and it was just a matter of assembling them. They made a goal and started chipping away. It became part of their daily, weekly and monthly routines. The process took four to six months.

The Accreditation process made the brothers step back and look at the company in a very detailed way, they say. “It created an internal awareness. We realized we were on the 70-yard line. It got us to truly become the company we thought we were.”

Doing the internal analysis that the process requires helped them pay attention to details they hadn’t paid attention to before, especially documentation. They enhanced their business plan, their standardized written specs and their safety manual. They documented their goals and incorporated them into their quarterly and annual meetings.

“We’re doing a lot of things now that we might not necessarily have done, and it helps us to be a better service provider,” Peter says.

The process made them more aware of safety, he says. They used TCIA’s online safety resources to strengthen their safety program, formalize their safety and training documentation and make some changes in their safety meetings.

“It’s more of a challenge to make meetings interesting now,” Tim says. “I try to set the tone. I tell them we’re going to have fun and that the meeting will last for 10 minutes, and I move it along. The smaller the group, the easier it is. Sometimes I’ll pull some of the guys aside.”

The brothers are setting up the company to grow exponentially in the next few years, Peter says. The work they did during the Accreditation process made it more clear how it could grow.

Both brothers are excited about TCIA’s Winter Management Conference coming to Hawaii in February.

“Normally I would have to travel about 12 hours (to get to a Winter Management Conference),” Tim says. “I’m looking forward to seeing people I know on our home turf and showing them our facility.”

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Circle 6 on RS Card or visit www.tcia.org/Publications
By J. O’Shea

I was electrically shocked three times, once many years ago while working as an arborist, then twice more while working as a line-clearance tree trimmer. Didn’t really matter what I was doing, I detected no difference in the sensations. It’s a full-body sting, like that of a huge mutant hornet, gone as quickly as you notice it. Your body limp as a snapped rag, but with deep aching.

Why would anyone expose him or herself to such risk? Why would a Certified Arborist, an award-winning, published, well-liked one at that, do this?

a) Like the utility (my opinion), I did it for the money;
b) I had worked, like so many climbers, close enough to wonder, “Am I too close?”;
c) I’m a teacher. It seems bizarre to me to ignore a facet of tree work that we all deal with.

So, I joined in. I learned. I was shocked – in more ways than one.

Workers go up in aerial lifts, on ladders or with ropes all over the U.S. to trim trees or remove them according to laws and specifications we all subscribe to. Even in our backyard. The scope of this article cannot encompass each of these laws, and readers are, no doubt, familiar with some of them. In short, it is only legal to trim, prune, climb or be in a tree within 10 feet of energized power lines if you are a qualified line-clearance tree trimmer (LCTT).

Even though some utilities require Certified Arborists on each crew, we must remember in our dealings with LCTTs that they are, generally, tree trimmers, not arborists. Now they are called line-clearance arborists, but they used to be called line-clearance tree trimmers – and they haven’t forgotten. Their life depends on identifying line voltage and pole hardware, not tree flowers. Their pay depends on eliminating hazards, not creating beauty. And yet, I have seen some masterful pruning along the lines I’ve worked. I have been in awe at some of the ways in which some nameless tree pruner has done the right thing way up there.

A qualified LCTT is legally allowed to work within 10 feet of lines carrying current. Lots of arborists do this, illegally, and with some success. We have never seen an accurate statistic on how many have died or been disabled by this. I don’t think we ever will. Who is going to admit wrongdoing at an emergency room? And if some of it gets swept under the rug, the statistics are skewed.

There are two reasons to send crews out to “clear” lines, meaning to cut a swath in vegetation 10 feet away and at least 4 feet above the primary power lines. In fact, what is done is called “vegetation management.”

The first and foremost reason, as with any business, is money. The utility loses money whenever there is a short circuit. Power is expensive to generate and con-
trol. It must be sent through a meter to be worth anything. So if it is leaking away through limbs or trunks of trees, going to ground, it isn’t making anyone any money.

The second reason is safety of the public and for those who work on utility lines and poles. If a tree were to become a good path to ground, it would be carrying unknown amounts of volts and those deadly amps. If someone were to now touch any part of that tree with any part of their body, or with a conductive tool, such as a rake, shovel or set of loppers, that person would be shocked and maybe electrocuted. Not just a horrible idea, it’s a law of physics.

The reason I say safety is the second priority is not that I think the utility company is cruel or has malicious intent. It is because electricity is capricious, evil and confusing. It does not always do what it should. Try and figure out which tree will conduct electricity, when, and who it might hurt, from a kid in a treehouse to the weekend warrior out trimming with an aluminum ladder and pole saw. It is nearly impossible.

Local utilities have public awareness campaigns for that and are increasingly proactive in home and garden shows and other outreach efforts to get the public looking up and thinking about it. “Right Tree Right Place” and “Never Touch a Downed Wire” are two examples of popular, well-thought-out campaigns.

Tree companies and their infantries have heard that they shouldn’t prune near primary lines, but most arborists do. Most of them know that “service drops” or secondaries, phone lines or cable TV cables can be lethal due to unseen links, short circuits or just the capriciousness of high-voltage electricity. But most of us do it anyway. Arborists are notoriously immortal-feeling individuals. Like bronco riders and race-car drivers, they tend to ignore the risks. If they are male and 18 to 25, are as most who I have met, they also pay high insurance rates on their cars due to actuarial tables proving (at least to the companies who insure them) that they are in a high-risk group.

I wanted to learn and to help teach and, just maybe, through pruning or coming out with information, I even felt I could make a difference in the utility field. I haven’t done any of that, but I did learn how many conflicting protocols these crews face. I faced them. And I gained compassion for the legions of these pruning pariahs.

Here are a few of the things said to me by my crew and general foreperson, who is the uber-supervisor who goes from crew to crew each day:

“Hurry up, man, we gotta get back to the shop.”

“Clear the lines, then trim what’s left.”

“Just cut the whole thing down and hide the stump. It’s a weed tree.”

“Shigo!? He might be a smart man, but he damn sure never trimmed around no power lines!”

(That comment takes some explaining. Dr. Alex Shigo published studies and wrote books on arboriculture that changed our industry’s practices by showing us how trees work, and what different methods of pruning do to a tree’s biology. He also wrote a booklet that is in most trucks that do line clearance.)

And a week before I quit, after a year of work:

“You haven’t quite caught on to what we do out here. You’re a good trimmer, you work hard, but you have to always be looking at how to get faster, to use the speed tools, not the damn pole clip.”

I worked at two of the largest, most successful line-clearance contractor companies, in two states, and over and over was told to “not worry” and to “bring my speed up.”

Yet my cuts were inspected. They had to be “collar cuts,” as the general foreperson would say. He wanted “good ‘lateral’ pruning.” I divined from this that I was to cut as well as an arborist and as fast as a machine. There was a cycle of pruning that had to be done, and the older, larger trees close to wires had been cut many times, so that I could see the work done by my predecessors. Follow-the-dots pruning, like my early coloring books.

I got to drive those beautiful new aerial-lift boom trucks with a “reach” of 55 feet. Unfortunately, the engineer designing them had, like Shigo, damn sure never trimmed. The older aerial-lift arm fit more handily between the wires. These were made to go over, so the operator constantly reached downward, or parked several times to fit under, either way losing time. And reaching down, pulling limbs up and over the lines, was hard on the lower back.

One thing I did gain from all this was a new perspective toward line clearance. Plenty of times I went up in the lift looking at branches that were two to three years longer since the last pruning cycle and found positively skillful cuts from the last time. I would have seen poor cuts, too, but there weren’t many. The choices that someone before me had made were often good choices. You had to be in a lift 32 feet high.
A Day in the Life of an LCTT Foreperson

Try to imagine yourself as a qualified line-clearance tree trimmer faced with these situations every day.

• You need to block traffic to put the outer pivot end, or knuckle, of your boom over the road. You hurry to get in between, cut quickly, safely remove the branch and toss it down. Someone is honking, and your flagger is hollering something to you. You can’t hear them over the motor. There is a complaint waiting for you the next morning. It was lodged by the disgruntled driver. In many cases, you must call and apologize. Not explain. Just listen and apologize.

• System foresters come up with new ways to make you work “more efficiently and faster.” This is often based less on actual trees and more on computer models. Some of them have never done a day’s work on a line-clearance crew, and if they did, few of them ever attained foreperson status. They are administrators, hired to get results. But their rules become your rules.

• The electrical-system map, and the time you take to finish it, are the bottom line by which you are judged. Complaints by customers are handled by the utility company and union policies. You are responsible for the “safety” of unpermitted, they aren’t. You are the lightning rod for any tree complaint.

• You must comply with state, federal and local traffic usage rules, including placement of signs, cones and wheel-chocks, and pull off the road to set them up. Daily stress. Like trying to pull a motor home off on a country road, unpacking several 20- or 30-pound packages and walking with them along the shoulder while traffic zips by inches away.

• You must have a signed document allowing the removal of any tree. Some counties and municipalities require a permit, too. Even for invasive exotic trees that residential tree professionals may take out with impunity. You are visible, they aren’t. You are the lightning rod for any tree complaint.

• Since crews change frequently, due to the company and union policies, you are responsible for the “safety” of untested employees daily. You may forget their names and yell to them, “Hey, uh... get the ...” from 50 feet up. Their second day on your crew.

• You are often the “lead” trimmer, or the only trimmer. You are responsible for the map. The union isn’t, and neither is the nice trimmer they send out.

• You go out on a job that a commercial arborist won’t touch until you’ve finished. It scares you. You wonder if your statistics will catch up, wonder if one of these days you’ll fry.

• You are 30 feet up, cutting a limb, and the truck lurches with you in it. You wonder if you did an adequate maintenance check or if the outrigger slipped (they’ll do that) or if, this time, something really broke.

• You go out on a job where someone else, an arborist, an LCTT or another foreman in your company, was electrocuted. You finish it. Even if it’s raining, you finish it and get away from that place.

• You arrive at a job and people are waving signs, chanting something about tree rights. It’s not your company or your policy, but they are looking at you. Personally. They seem angry. You can’t fight unfair rules or raging traffic or your “superiors” or the company you work for. They can. Instead, they are yelling at you for doing your job.

I guess it’s apparent that I’ve gained more than a perspective. I feel as though I’d always been biased before, when I hadn’t understood that some arborists risk more than others, each day, for a living.

I’m proud to be a residential specialist once again, but I’m finding that my critical eye is somewhat more relaxed now that I’ve done a few miles of line clearance.

From the ground it looks like, and it is, a swath. From up there, it’s the best possible swath, given the protocols and the circumstances, says the author.

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John O’Shea is an ISA Certified Arborist with 32 years of industry experience. He was a foreman on line-clearance crews in Hawaii and Oregon. Currently living and working in California, he has served as an expert witness and is considered an authority on trees in the landscape, in rights of way and on public property. He has taught, trained and competed with top arborists in the U.S. and Hong Kong.

Opinions expressed in this article are the author’s and not those of TCI Magazine.

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How high most crossers are on most power poles — to see this. From the ground it looks like, and it is, a swath. From up there, it’s the best possible swath, given the protocols and the circumstances, says the author.
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TCI EXPO, the world’s largest tree care industry trade show and conference, just wrapped its 27th year, and it was our biggest Midwest show ever! Held at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio, TCI EXPO 2017 drew more than 3,300 tree care professionals from across the globe for three days of business, safety and arboriculture workshops and seminars; live tree climbing demonstrations; networking opportunities; and the chance to visit 240 exhibitors showcasing the latest tree care products and services.

“We attend about 25 to 30 shows every year,” says Bill Stringfellow, president of exhibitor Quest Products Corporation. “Hands down (TCI EXPO) is the BEST of them all. Great job by staff looking after us and all our needs. We sure look forward to next year.”

Membership raffle
This was open to any member who attended the show. All that was required was to stop by TCIA’s membership booth and fill out a raffle ticket. Congratulations to Braden Fisher, owner of Vegetation Tech, LLC, an eight-year TCIA member based in Troy, Ohio. Enjoy your Smarter-Tools portable generator!

Game on!
This was available to those who downloaded the TCI EXPO app. Participants had opportunities to earn points by answering polls, surveys and quizzes; connect with attendees and exhibitors; download session materials; and post photos to the app.

Congratulations to the daily prize winners, Ian Michel of Slater Diederick Tree Care, LLC, Jody Maddox of Hendrickson Tree Care and Barry Donohue of Anytown Tree Service for winning the $100 Cabela’s gift cards. Congratulations to Joe Orewiler of Spencer’s Tree & Landscape Solutions, LLC, for winning the grand prize, a Parrot Bebop drone!

Arborbucks
Every attendee received a form for the Arborbucks drawings. All they had to do was fill it out, put it in the big gold bin, then be around at the Climbing Tree in the middle of the trade-show floor for the drawing. Four drawings were made over the course of the show, each for $1,150 in Arborbucks, which could then be spent at any of the participating exhibitors at the show.

Congratulations to the four winners: James Hentges of Hentges Tree Service, Richard Cundiff of Cundiff Tree Care, Kent May of Shenandoah Valley Electric Coop and Joey Busker of Hentges Tree Service.

Student Career Days
In addition to the trade show and conference, TCI EXPO hosted a Student Career Days (SCD) event that...
drew more than 230 college and vocational students representing 17 schools from across the country. Students participated in tree-climbing competitions, attended educational seminars, networked with potential employers and explored career opportunities at the industry’s only job and internship fair.

As always, we want to extend a thank you to our industry partners.

TCI EXPO 2017 was brought to you, in part, by our PACT partners: **Crown**: Altec Industries, Inc.; Bandit Industries, Inc.; Husqvarna; Morbark, LLC; Utility One Source Forestry Equipment, LLC; and Vermeer. **Branch**: Green Manufacturing. **Root**: George Fern Exposition and Event Services, Arborjet, ServicePro. **Seed**: Mauget, Fanno Saw Works, Northern Atlantic Financial, Liberty Financial Group, division of Navitas Credit Corp; and Weaver Leather, LLC.

View more photos of TCI EXPO 2017 on Facebook and Flickr.

Ready for the next TCI EXPO? Join the Tree Care Industry Association in Charlotte, North Carolina, later this year for TCI EXPO 2018, November 8-10. You won’t want to miss it – the trade-show floor has already had to be expanded and will be packed with more amazing vendors than ever.

See you in Charlotte!
Thank you TCI EXPO 2017 Exhibitors!

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Attendees discuss the various PHC products available in the ArborSystems booth.

TCIA’s Bob Rouse, from left, TCIA Accreditation auditor John Iurka and Bob Good, president of TCIA-accredited Good’s Tree Care, Inc., talk in the Accreditation booth at TCI EXPO.

Altec reps show attendees some of the new technology built into their grapple-mounted saw unit.
Utility One Source Forestry showcased some impressive heavy equipment, some reaching into the rafters.

Families brought their budding future arborists. Here, Randell Jay and Christina Jayne Tocholke, of Lindstrom, Minnesota, fit some new head gear on their son in the Teufelberger booth.
The 21st annual Tree Care Industry Association Foundation (TCI-AF) Student Career Days (SCD) wrapped up another successful event in Columbus, Ohio, November 2-4, 2017. More than 230 college and vocational students representing 17 schools from across the country attended SCD, which was held in conjunction with TCI EXPO.

As the largest career-development event for students enrolled in arboriculture, urban forestry, horticulture, forestry and related programs, SCD features a Student Skills Competition as well as a Job and Internship Fair.

The Student Skills Competition comprised three main events: Safety Gear Check, Belayed Scramble and Work Climb. Top finishers in each event received gift certificates for Stihl merchandise.

Overall winners included Shane Brett from Kent Roosevelt High School (Vocational Men’s), Erin Rockwell from Kent Roosevelt High School (Vocational Women’s), Blake Russ from Milwaukee Area Technical College (Collegiate Men’s) and Laura Mantin from Milwaukee Area Tech-

Some of the students attending the Student Career Days Job & Internship Fair at TCI EXPO ham for the camera with some of their swag – water bottles from Ahlum & Arbor.

Congratulations to all the winners of the Student Career Days competitions.

A student competitor prepares for the belayed speed climb.
technical College (Collegiate Women’s). A complete list of SCD winners and scores is available online at expo.tcia.org under the Student Career Days tab.

Mark Chisholm, Stihl spokesperson, Certified Arborist and three-time ISA international tree climbing champion, was on site during the Student Skills Competition at Goodale Park to offer climbing tips. “It’s fantastic to see so many students invested in their careers and the future of professional tree care,” says Chisholm. “This event highlights the strength and future growth of our industry.”

Student Career Days also hosts a Job & Internship Fair during TCI EXPO, which allows students to meet with some of the biggest names in tree care and gives them the chance to interview for potential careers.

Student Career Days is hosted by TCIAF, whose mission is to advance education and professional development in the green industry, improve safety and reduce accident rates in the tree care industry, and disseminate information key to practitioners and consumers about proper tree care.

Student Career Days 2017 partners included Stihl, Ahlum & Arbor, Bandit Industries, Inc., Bartlett Tree Experts, BrightView Tree Care Services, Davey Tree Expert Company, the International Society of Arboriculture, SavATree, Townsend, Tree Care Inc. and Vermeer.

There’s no better way for a company to help enhance the future of the industry than becoming a SCD partner. To learn more, contact TCIA at 800-733-2622 or studentcareerdays@tcia.org.
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We are looking for someone to join our Management Team who has experience in tree care or lawn care. Must have a minimum of 3 years’ verifiable experience in the Green Industry. Must be self-motivated and driven. Class A CDL, ISA certification, or Cat. 24/27 pesticide license are a plus but not necessary for the right candidate. Must have a clean driving record and valid D/L. Responsibilities include but are not limited to: supervision, sales, office support (MS Office a plus), managing daily tasks and equipment. Please fill out the online application at our website, www.premiertreeandshrubcare.com, and send a resume to premiertreecare@yahoo.com. No phone calls. Pay starts at $41,600 per year or more based on experience. We offer paid holidays, paid vacation & 401(k).

Tree Awareness, Inc. Seeks Production Leaders, Bucket Operators, Skilled Climbers, Trainees
Tree Awareness, Inc. provides professional tree management to municipal, residential and commercial clients in the Philadelphia suburbs. We use the latest arboricultural science to provide steadfast service to our clientele and possess an unwavering commitment to improve the safety and aesthetic beauty of properties. The growth of our company is directly linked to our team’s professional development. We invest in and value professionals who are mature and understand what it takes to work in our industry. Learn about us at www.treeawareness.com or send resumes, Attn: Mia, to treeawarenessoffice@aol.com.

Tree Climbers/Groundworkers, Cambridge, MA
Tree climbers, bucket-truck operators and ground personnel. Minimum 1-3 years’ experience. Must have clean, valid driver’s license, CDL a plus. We offer full-time work and benefits. We provide high-quality tree care for commercial and residential clients. We at Cambridge Landscape think safety first. Apply jnardelli@cambridgelandscape.com.

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Part-Time Regional Outreach Coordinators – Virginia, the Carolinas, Florida/Georgia
The Tree Care Industry Association’s outreach coordinator position will concentrate on creating groups of tree care business owners who meet and interact regularly (face-to-face and online) and facilitate increased participation in TCIA programs. Will live and work in the assigned region to organize member gatherings and recruit and retain new, current and ex-members in the region. Target areas would be in North/South Carolina and Virginia, Florida/Georgia. For complete job description, requirements and application details, visit www.jobs.tcia.org. Resume and cover letter to: Tom Dunn, tdunn@tcia.org.
Sales Rep, AZ
Certified Arborist preferred. Commissions only. Prepare estimates on sales, build relationships with clients & business partners; manage & expand existing clients. Excellent pay! Climbers also needed. 480-970-1315 Sales@aztreedoctor.com

Salesperson, Fairfax, VA
Busy tree service company in business since 1975 with over 70 employees located in Fairfax, Virginia, is looking for another Salesperson to estimate tree work in a dedicated service area ASAP. Training, great pay, benefits, etc. 703-863-0629; siewett@gmail.com.

We Are a Growing Team of Arborists!
We are looking for people who value our profession, are committed to keeping each other safe and who want to have fun at work! Great bennies-small company. Boulder, CO, a beautiful place to work. Send us your resume. office@taddiken.tree.com

Experienced Tree Climbers Needed, Seattle!
If you are a hard-working team player who is looking to advance your career with a company that will invest in you, and that will value your loyalty and dedication, we are the company for you. A prominent Northwest residential tree care company prides itself in exceeding industry standards in every way. We value our employees and are looking to add team members who want to advance and grow with the company. We offer extremely competitive pay plans, opportunity for advancement, training, and we will reward your hard work and dedication with loyalty to you. Searching for team members who have mastered modern techniques for climbing and rigging, and have expertise in pruning and thinning. Only interested in applicants who have experience in close-quarter technical tree removals. Especially interested in hiring ISA Certified Arborists or those interested and willing to earn their Arborist certification. This job does require relocation to the Seattle/Tacoma area and extensive travel is a must – do not apply if you are not willing to do both of these things. If you are hard working and a team player, it’s time you make a move to a company that will reward your dedication – apply today!
We offer: $2,500 Signing Bonus! Above-industry-average salary. Retirement plan: Simple IRA with company matching. Excellent benefits, including medical and dental. Full-time structured work schedule 12 months a year (guaranteed!).Opportunities for advancement. Bonuses available upon ISA certification. Paid travel expenses. We also provide: uniforms, equipment, work-boot stipends. Make a move to invest in your career and email to schedule a working interview today! Contact: danielle.westcoasttree@gmail.com.

Arborist/Crew Leaders, Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
Currently seeking arborists, ISA Certified, or in progress. Crew leaders, climbers, bilingual a plus. Incentives, vacation, 401(k). Will consider relocation assistance. Email pp@preservationtree.com. EOE

“Doing the Right Thing for People and Trees”
If this describes you, we’d like to meet. It’s that simple! Sales arborists, production/operation manager, climbers. Great benefits & career advancement! Learn more at www.RTECtreecare.com or call 703-573-3029.

View or place a resume on www.tcia.jobs.org for more information, contact classifieds@tcia.org

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We never stop looking for the right people. Opportunities are available in each of our offices across Canada, the US, UK and Ireland.

Open Positions
We are seeking experienced and entry level candidates for these roles:
- Arborist Representative
- Arborist Crew Leader
- Arborist Climber
- Plant Health Care Specialist

The Bartlett Difference
At Bartlett, we put safety above all else, we offer the best compensation package in the industry, and we’ll give you the tools you need to improve your skill set and advance your career.
Midwest – Chicagoland Certified Arborist & Sales
Assist owner in daily operations, sales and client contact for an established territory. Must possess skills in identification of plants, insects and disease. Full benefits include company vehicle, medical, dental, life insurance and retirement plan. This is a salary plus commission position (6 figures). Submit resume to: Vince Winkler, Winkler’s Tree & Landscaping, Inc. P.O. Box 1154, LaGrange Park, IL 60526. 708-544-1219 or info@winklerstreeservice.com. Discretion assured.

Director of Tree Planting

Climbing Arborist, Ft. Worth, TX
Work with a small gardening staff on a private 10-acre estate. Must be a Cert Arborist, have a valid driver’s license, pass a security check. IPM knowledge a plus. Salary negotiable, benefits available. Susan Seurshel@yahoo.com.

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Tree, Shrub & Spray Service
Established 40+ years in a prime northeast New Jersey area with an excellent reputation & loyal clientele. Equipment optional. $1,000,000 + sales. Serious inquiries only – please call 973-495-2409.

Tree Business Equip. & Customer Base, Central NJ

Tree Trimming/Removal Business, AZ
Owner retiring after 25 years. $1+ million in sales annually! Dump trucks, chippers, stump cutters, all saws, blowers, etc. Business nets $300k+ per year. $1.2 million for everything. Serious inquiries only. 480-244-8056, Andy.

Family Owned & Operated Tree Service

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE
Opdyke Inc.
150+ specialized trucks in stock, boom/crane/knucklebooms, 4x4 single and tandem. Go to our website www.opdykes.com; 215-721-4444.

Two Spray Trucks

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Super strong and easy to use! Choose black or Hi-Viz yellow and orange. 30+ in-stock models ship next business day. Family owned & operated, est. in 1998 and proudly made in the USA. 800-610-3422, sales@dicausa.com, dicausa.com.

Residential Commercial Tree Service Business, Portland, OR

Tree Trimming/Removal Business, AZ
Owner retiring after 25 years. $1+ million in sales annually! Dump trucks, chippers, stump cutters, all saws, blowers, etc. Business nets $300k+ per year. $1.2 million for everything. Serious inquiries only. 480-244-8056, Andy.

Family Owned & Operated Tree Service

PHC Manager, Sheffield, MA

Climbers/Bucket-Truck Operators, Crane Operators
Ping’s Tree Service, one of the largest tree services in Central Indiana, is seeking climbers/bucket-truck operators and crane operators. Must be experienced in residential and commercial tree care, including: crown reductions, thinning, pruning and working with cranes. Must have technical rigging skills in all facets of tree trimming and removal. Lic. drivers only. PHC techs and cert. arborists also needed. Join one of Indiana’s leading tree-removal companies. Top wages and great benefits. Apply online without delay at pingstreesevice.com/employment.html.

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Family Owned & Operated Tree Service
What's on your hiring bucket list?

Here are five easy tips to ensure qualified candidates read your job listing:

1. **Clear job title.** How do you draw them in? Job titles don’t need frills; be clear what the position is.

2. **Think honey, not vinegar.** What are you looking for? You have expectations for training and experience – make them clear, but balance clarity with respect.

3. **Introduce your company.** Who are you? Candidates should get a sense of your size and, more importantly, your company culture.

4. **Highlight perks.** Why should they work with you? Competitive pay, training programs and health benefits are all important to list if you offer them.

5. **Post your job on the TCI JobBoard.** Where can they find you? We get hundreds of qualified candidates browsing jobs each day!

**BONUS:** TCIA offers several ways to elevate your job listing for more visibility!

- Boost your post on the TCI JobBoard to be at the top of search results
- Place a job ad in TCI Magazine for visibility to 24,000 readers
- Reach veterans through the Veteran’s Network
- Blast your job to 3rd party sites with TalentBoost
- Attract diverse talent via the Diversity Network
The following companies recently joined the Tree Care Industry Association as Associate Members. Associate Members provide the equipment, products and services used by tree care companies to do business.

If you get the chance, please welcome them aboard.

CIS Auctions
PO Box 626
East Tawas, MI 48730-0626
Phone: 810-687-3812
Contact: Ben Kendra
benthebusman@gmail.com
www.cisauctions.com

We have 35 years’ experience and have sold more than 10,000 vehicles. We are seasoned in getting top dollar for your assets. We are also your resources for auctioning and the private sale of trucks, heavy equipment, machinery and miscellaneous equipment.

Isuzu Commercial Truck of America
1400 South Douglass Road, Suite 100
Anaheim, CA 92806
Phone: 714-935-9339
Contact: Michael Eads
michael.eads@icta-us.com
www.isuzuvc.com

Isuzu provides choices that deliver outstanding performance with a lower cost of ownership. Distributor of class 3-6 commercial trucks.

Pigeon Mountain Industries (PMI)
3850 York St.
Denver, CO 80205
Phone: 706-764-1437
Contact: Ken Hauser
info@pmirope.com
www.pmirope.com

PMI manufactures ropes and accessory cords for rope-access, fire/rescue, work-at-height and recreational users. We also distribute hardware for these industries and end users, and provide training and education on the proper use of all of our products, including our PMI solutions and kits.

Haix North America, Inc.
2320 Fortune Drive, Suite 120
Lexington, KY 40509
Phone: 866-344-4249
Contact: Sandy Longarzo
service-hna@haix.com
www.haix.com

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for professional tree care companies

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AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
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CROWN
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ARBORJET

ROOT
GEORGE FERN
NORTHERN ATLANTIC TRAINING SOLUTIONS

SEED
MAJUET
LIBERTY FINANCIAL

SERVICEPRO
SHERRILL

TREE CARE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION | 800-733-2622 | TCIA.ORG
ADVANCING TREE CARE BUSINESSES SINCE 1938
Before we get to this month’s briefs, here are a few older, unreported incidents we came across.

Tree worker killed working on skid steer
A tree worker was killed January 23, 2015, in Massachusetts when he was crushed between the bucket and body of a compact skid steer.

A 38-year-old foreman for a tree service company was standing in front of a skid steer under the raised lift arm and bucket while performing repair work on the loader’s high-pressure hydraulic lines. Once the hydraulic line was removed, the lift arm and bucket came down, crushing the victim against the loader’s frame. He died at the scene, according to a report from the Massachusetts Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program.

Contributing factors identified in the investigation include working under an unsupported raised load, the lift-arm support device not being engaged to prevent the lift arm from lowering, and a lack of a safety and health program and lockout/tagout procedures. For the full report, go to https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/face/pdfs/15ma004.pdf.

Man shocked touching downed wire
A man lost part of his arm after he was shocked June 16, 2017, in Portsmouth, Virginia, while moving a branch that was in contact with a downed power line. Antonio Myrick, 20, of Portsmouth, had to have his left arm amputated just below the elbow and was hospitalized for two weeks.

Apparently, a branch broke from a pecan tree and landed on a live power line. The line fell to the ground and on top of a vehicle that belonged to Myrick’s friend. Myrick went to clear what he thought was debris from the top of the vehicle. It was raining at the time. The power line shocked Myrick when he touched it, and he had to be separated from the wire by a neighbor with a rake.

In early December 2017, Myrick filed suit against Dominion Energy, alleging that Dominion and its line-clearance contractor did not prune the nearby trees properly and allowed vegetation to overhang its power lines. He’s seeking $25 million in damages, according to a report in The Virginian-Pilot.

Arborist loses hand in wood splitter

Allan Poole, 66, owner of Allan’s Tree Service, was using a wood processor that cuts and splits the wood into several pieces and drops them onto a conveyor belt for loading a truck or trailer. Poole had used the machine for five years without an incident. The machine was idle when he reached in to clear a piece of bark. When he did so, his leg hit the button to start the machine’s auto-split cycle and his hand was severed.

“In three or four seconds, my hand was cut in half and also cut off at the wrist, and my fingers were cut off from my hand,” Poole told The Middletown Press.

“At first I couldn’t believe it happened,” he said, so he reached in with his right hand to grab what he thought was his cleanly severed hand. It took a while for him to realize the gravity of his injury.

“I was in shock, but then I realized my hand wasn’t in one piece,” he said. “I held the hand against my chest, and I had to walk through a path through the woods and over a brook to get back to my house.”

That’s when he saw his wife of more than 40 years working in the garden. Immediately, she took his belt and cinched it around his wrist to stop the blood flow.

“I was in and out consciousness,” Poole...
said. “The pain was really awful.”

He was taken to the hospital and learned that his hand could not be saved, according to a report in The Middletown Press.

**Bucket operator dies after being shocked**

A tree care worker shocked October 25, 2017, in Dodge City, Kansas, while trimming trees from an aerial lift bucket, died from his injuries November 4.

Riley Gibson, 34, of Dodge City, owned a tree service business for 14 years. He was in a bucket lift trimming trees when his back came into contact with an 8,000-volt power line. This rendered him unconscious and on fire, according to a report from his wife on a Facebook page.

His brother was working with him and quickly ran to get the lift down and away from the power line. The brother ran to grab the fire extinguisher and, as he was returning, Riley was convulsing, then fell out of the lift from a height of approximately 10 feet and landed on his head on concrete.

His went to one hospital by ambulance and was then airlifted to an emergency burn unit in Wichita, Kansas, where he died a little more than a week later.

**November 2017 accidents**

**Man killed in tree-cutting accident**

A man died in a struck-by incident November 1, 2017, in Rhea County, Tennessee.

The victim was cutting a tree down on a family property and there was a dead snag in the top of the tree. The dead limb or section came down and hit the man in the head, knocking him unconscious and sending him into cardiac arrest.

He was airlifted to a hospital, where he later passed away, according to a WTVC Newschannel 9 report.

**Climber hurt in 40-foot fall**

A climber was injured when he fell about 40 feet out of a tree November 7, 2017, in Gloucester Township, New Jersey. The victim was brought to a nearby school field from which he was airlifted for medical treatment, according to a Gloucester Township patch.com report.

**Two tree workers die after being shocked by power**

Two tree workers died after one of them came into contact with a power line while the pair was working from an aerial-lift platform November 14, 2017, in Akron, Ohio.

George F. Csikos, 38, of New Franklin, Ohio, was pronounced dead at the scene of the electrocution. Jessica Richmond, 46, of Barberton, Ohio, died from her injuries on November 19.

The two were working for a private contractor. An Akron homeowner hired them to trim trees. They were in a lift bucket when Csikos apparently made contact with an electrical wire. The electrocution may have thrown Richmond from the lift.

Akron Fire Department paramedics found Csikos dead in the lift. They found Richmond on the ground and took her to the hospital, according to reports from Fox8 and cleveland.com.

Video footage showed the pair was using an uninsulated rental lift.

**Man killed in fall from tree**

A man was killed when he fell out of a
The feeling of invincibility that comes with working for years without an incident is known as:

a. overconfidence  
b. complacency  
c. leadership  
d. safety

Fallibility in crew workers can be:

a. eliminated  
b. scheduled  
c. moderated  
d. taught

The absence of rules, or not knowing the rules, leads to:

a. anarchy  
b. engineering failures  
c. execution failures  
d. planning failures

Ignoring the rules leads to:

a. anarchy  
b. engineering failures  
c. execution failures  
d. planning failures

To improve safety in the tree care industry:

a. design systems that avoid or eliminate execution failures  
b. implement a team approach  
c. engineer controls and regulations  
d. all of the above

The man, 82, suff ered a broken leg, two broken hips, a broken shoulder and a spinal fracture.

A police offi cer reported hearing the workers arguing about which one of them caused the accident, according to a WESH ABC Action News report.

Man injured by collapsed palm fronds

A tree worker was hospitalized with serious injuries after he was rescued from under a skirt of collapsed palm fronds November 26, 2017, in Phoenix, Arizona. The man was in a harness about 50 feet in the air when palm fronds fell and incapacitated him.

Emergency responders used a ladder truck with a bucket to reach the victim, remove the fronds and rescue the man, who wasn’t breathing and didn’t have a pulse.

Crew members tried to resuscitate the man on the way to the hospital. Further details about his condition were not immediately available, according to a report in The Arizona Republic.

Man killed by cut tree

A man cutting trees November 26,
2017, in Brentwood, New Hampshire, was found dead after he was apparently struck by a tree he had been cutting down.

According to a subsequent investigation, the man, 35, was actively notchng a tree when another he had already begun to cut was blown over by a strong gust of wind, striking him from behind, according to an NECN and necn.com report.

Homeowner hurt when knocked from ladder

A homeowner trimming a tree was injured November 27, 2017, in Rydal, Bartow County, Georgia, when he was knocked off his ladder by the limb he’d just cut, throwing him about 20 feet to the ground. The patient was transported to WellStar Kennes- stone Hospital for treatment, according to a Cartersville patch.com report.

Man killed helping cut tree

A 77-year-old man was killed November 29, 2017, in Eagle, Wisconsin, when he was struck by a tree he was helping cut down.

Richard Berner, 77, of Watertown, was working as a volunteer for the Old World Wisconsin historic site when he was struck by the cut oak, according to a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel report.

Man rescued after losing ladder

An elderly man trimming a tree November 30, 2017, in Mountain View, North Carolina, was rescued from about 30 feet up when the ladder he was using to access the tree fell.

The man had been trimming tree limbs with a chain saw in his yard. He had used a 30-foot-long ladder and was left stuck on a tree limb after the ladder fell, possibly due to the vibrations from the chain saw. A relative of the man made the call for help.

Climber killed one-handing chain saw in Great Britain

A climber was killed February 15, 2017, in Bermondsey, Surrey County, England, after cutting his own neck while one-handing a chain saw.

Grigore Bulbuc, 31, from Sydenham, in Kent County, and a tree surgeon for 10 years, was trimming a large sycamore in the backyard of a residence when the incident occurred. He was about 50 feet up when he apparently made a cut very close to his body and with only one hand on the chain saw when the saw kicked back, severing his jugular vein and carotid artery. He was left dangling on a rope 50 feet in the air.

Burbuc had been working with two other crew members cleaning up the debris on the ground.

Police and paramedics rushed to the scene, but were unable to save him. He was pronounced dead about an hour later.

“I could see Greg holding a branch in his right hand and cutting the branch with a chain saw in his other hand,” the victim’s boss told an inquest. “As I looked up, I saw the chain saw kick back and go into his shoulder and neck. It went into his neck on his left side. It was quite deep and I realized immediately he had injured himself badly,” the boss reported.

Firefighters used a sturdier, 35-foot-long ladder on a Mountain View fire truck to help the man return to the ground – without any injuries, according to the Wilkes Journal-Patriot report.

TCIA Accident Survey for 2017 operations underway

Accidents continue to increase in the tree care industry, and this trend is distressing to companies, employees and consumers. TCIA’s annual Accident Survey is just one tool we’re using to combat this increasing problem.

By supplying information, you will help TCIA compile information our industry needs to become more aware of how safety awareness and training and safe operations can help our businesses and save lives. So we’re asking you to follow the directions at the end of this article to participate in TCIA’s Accident Survey for 2017 Operations. This short survey will take only a few moments to complete.

As a reward for responding (promptly and fully) to the Accident Survey, one survey respondent will be selected at random to receive up to $250 in safety-training materials.

To be eligible for the reward, please provide the contact information requested on the survey form. Providing contact information is optional, and the information will not be used for marketing purposes. All responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality; data will only be shared in aggregate form with the outside world.

TCIA thanks you in advance for your contribution to making our industry a little safer this year.

For the survey, go to www.tcia.org and, under Resources tab, click Survey Center. Or, in the digital version of this issue of TCIF, click this link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017AccidentSurvey
New finding for pollinator protection

Researchers at Michigan State University’s entomology department have unlocked a key to maintain pyrethroid insecticide’s effectiveness in eliminating pests without killing beneficial insects, such as bees. The study shows that specific molecular configurations make the difference.

Pyrethroids target a protein “gate” called a sodium channel found in nerve and muscle cells and used for rapid electrical signaling. Pyrethroids bind to this gate, preventing it from closing. The nervous system becomes over-stimulated and the insect dies. These pesticides don’t have the same effect on humans or other mammals, which is why pyrethroids like permethrin can be used to treat clothing to protect against ticks, or in your pets’ flea and tick collars.

Ke Dong, MSU insect toxicologist and neurobiologist and co-author of the paper, zeroed in on a single protein that conferred upon bumble bees the same resistance as humans. Tau-fluvalinate, or TF, is the active ingredient (or one of them) in certain pyrethroid insecticides.

The research showed that unique structural features in bee sodium channels interfere with the binding of TF. This opens the possibility of designing new chemicals that target sodium channels of pests but spare bees.

For the current study, Dong and her team focused on a longstanding enigma that bumble bees and honey bees are highly sensitive to most pyrethroids, but were resistant to TF. Currently, TF is widely used to control agricultural pests and also varroa mites, which ironically are one of the biggest threats to bees worldwide.

Eventually, the team discovered that the channel is resistant to TF but sensitive to other pyrethroids. Further mutational analysis and computer modeling revealed that specific amino acid residues in bumble bee sodium channels are responsible for the selective toxicity.

Future research will examine sodium channels from various pest and beneficial insects to explore the features of pyrethroid binding sites, which could lay the groundwork for designing new and selective pesticides. It also will shed light on how pests develop resistance to insecticides over time and how beneficial insects respond to them in the field.

TF is the sole active ingredient in Mavrik Aquaflow, a broad-spectrum product labelled for many turf and ornamental applications. The product is not completely safe for honeybees, as noted in this excerpt from the product label: “This product is toxic to fish and aquatic organisms. This product is toxic to honey bees if bees are exposed to direct application. However, dried residues of this product are non-toxic to honey bees. Treat during non-foraging periods to minimize adverse effects.”

USFS to award $7 million in grants for projects in wood-energy markets

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service is taking grant applications for projects that expand wood-products and wood-energy markets, especially in areas with high wildfire risk. Applications may be submitted through January 22, 2018.

Grants provided through the agency’s Wood Innovations program not only help reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health, but also create jobs to promote economic vitality in our communities.

In 2018, the program will invest up to $7 million in projects designed to have a long-term impact on lands managed by the agency and other forest lands by leveraging the market for low-value wood. Funding is available to support a diverse range of activities, from completing engineering designs, cost analyses, permitting or other requirements for the final stages of commercial construction projects using wood as a primary building material as well as developing a cluster of wood-energy projects in a specific geographic area. Funding may also support business planning and efforts to accelerate the manufacturing, market adoption and demonstration of innovative wood products, such as cross-laminated timber.

Since 2005, almost 280 grants have been awarded to small businesses, non-profits, institutions of higher education, tribes, states and local governments to improve forest health while creating jobs, renewable energy and healthy communities. Since 2013, this funding also has helped establish 22 Statewide Wood Energy Teams and eight Statewide Wood Utilization Teams that collectively expand and support wood-energy and wood-products markets.

The deadline for submitting grant applications is Jan. 22, 2018. Information on how to apply is available on the Wood Innovations Grants website or the Wood Education and Resource Center website.

For more information about the U.S. Forest Service, visit www.fs.fed.us.
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The weather is definitely changing in the Midwest. It seems we are all starting to think of heading inside around Chicago. Just a few weeks ago my wife noticed a mouse on our screened porch that I assume had the same idea.

I grabbed the trap we call Hotel California off the garage shelf, placed a piece of cheese in it and set it where I thought the mouse would be tempted. After awhile, we didn’t see the mouse around, but I checked and it wasn’t in the trap either, just the piece of cheese. Without cleaning the trap, I took it back out to the garage and placed in on a shelf.

Now that it’s colder, we are starting to notice our two black cats sitting calmly in front of the piano. This has been a favorite place for mice in the past. I went and grabbed the trap out of the garage and brought it into the kitchen. I noticed a strong odor and then remembered I hadn’t cleaned it. My assumption was that the cheese had gone bad. I opened the trap and jumped back when I saw a dead mouse inside.

Now, why wouldn’t I anticipate that? It is a mouse trap, and I was the one who left it baited. Anyway, I cleaned it out and put a cracker inside loaded with peanut butter. As I walked into the family room considering the best spot for the trap, I noticed one of our cats sitting patiently in front of the door looking up at a mouse clinging to the screen. No problem figuring out where to place the trap.

I read a report recently where one of our crews opened a transformer and the lid fell off onto unprotected secondaries, resulting in a flash. We also had a driver report that he looked down at the GPS as he drove up to a red light, and then when he looked up again he couldn’t stop in time to prevent a rear-end collision. While it would be nice if we had a huge warning sign every time something wasn’t going to be exactly as we expect, shouldn’t we learn to anticipate what might go wrong or what type of approach is needed before something bad happens?

For me, if I thought the mouse trap would work inside the house, why wouldn’t I anticipate that left baited out in the garage, a mouse would wander into it. Our employees work on equipment that is aged and often not in the best shape. While there isn’t going to be a black cat sitting patiently nearby to provide a heads up, there are certainly ways to anticipate many of our hazards.

Tim Ayers, Certified Utility Safety Professional (CUSP), is director, occupational health & safety with Intren, Inc. in Union, Illinois. He is also a former Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP) and safety & performance manager with accredited TCIA member Kramer Tree Specialists.
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