

TCIA ISSUE BRIEF

Protecting the Workforce Behind Healthy Trees and Safe Communities



Protect Crews – Workplace Safety – OSHA Tree Care Standard

Tree care professionals perform some of the most challenging and hazardous work in America. They climb trees, operate specialized equipment, work near energized conductors, and respond to storm damage in environments that demand skill, training, and constant attention to safety.

Although the industry has made significant progress through training, education, and professional standards, tree care remains one of the nation's most hazardous occupations. Protecting workers is essential to maintaining a safe, professional, and sustainable industry.

☑ TCIA supports practical safety policies, industry-specific standards, and workforce development initiatives that help every tree care professional return home safely at the end of the day.

Why It Matters

Safety is fundamental to the success of every tree care business. Workplace injuries and fatalities affect workers, families, employers, and the communities they serve. They can also increase costs, disrupt operations, and make it harder to recruit and retain skilled employees.

Protecting crews requires more than compliance. It requires clear safety standards, effective training, strong safety cultures, and collaboration among employers, workers, regulators, and industry leaders.

TCIA's Position - TCIA supports policies and programs that:

- Reduce workplace injuries and fatalities.
- Advance practical, industry-specific safety standards.
- Promote recognized safety best practices and training.
- Improve regulatory clarity and consistency.
- Support workforce education and professional development.
- Recognize the unique hazards of tree care operations.

Protecting crews is essential to strengthening businesses and growing the tree care industry.

Areas of Focus

OSHA Tree Care Standard

Tree care remains one of the few high-hazard industries without a dedicated OSHA safety standard. Today, employers and regulators must interpret a patchwork of standards developed for other industries, which can create confusion and inconsistent application.

☑ TCIA supports the development of a tree care-specific standard based on established industry best practices that provides greater clarity for employers, workers, and regulators alike.

Heat Injury and Illness Prevention

Tree care professionals often perform strenuous outdoor work in challenging weather conditions.

☑ TCIA supports practical approaches to preventing heat-related illness through training, planning, hydration, and effective workplace safety programs. Safety requirements should protect workers while recognizing the diverse conditions and operational realities of tree care work.

Workforce Training and Safety Education

Training is one of the most effective tools for improving workplace safety.

From apprenticeships and career pathways to continuing education and safety credentialing, workforce development programs help employees build the skills needed to work safely and professionally.

☑ TCIA supports education and training initiatives that strengthen safety performance and prepare the next generation of tree care professionals.

Regulatory Clarity and Consistency

Safety regulations are most effective when they are clear, practical, and consistently applied. Employers benefit from knowing what is expected, while workers benefit from clear and effective protections.

☑ TCIA supports efforts to improve communication, guidance, and coordination between regulators and industry stakeholders to promote better safety outcomes.

Looking Forward

The tree care industry has invested heavily in safety through training, professional standards, and a culture of continuous improvement.

Continued progress will depend on practical policies, strong partnerships, and a shared commitment to protecting the people who care for America's trees. By improving worker protection, expanding training opportunities, and providing clear regulatory guidance, we can continue making tree care safer for everyone.

Protect Crews. Strengthen Businesses. Grow the Industry.

About TCIA Issue Briefs

TCIA Issue Briefs provide an overview of priority issues affecting the tree care industry and the Tree Care Industry Association's policy positions. These briefs are intended for educational purposes and may be updated as industry conditions, regulatory developments, and policy priorities evolve.