

TCIA ISSUE BRIEF

Building the Workforce that Powers the Tree Care Industry



Workforce Development & Career Pathways

Tree care is a skilled profession that combines technical expertise, safety awareness, problem-solving, and hands-on experience. From climbing arborists and equipment operators to plant health care specialists and utility vegetation managers, tree care professionals help maintain public safety, protect natural resources, and strengthen communities. As demand for professional tree care services continues to grow, the industry must attract, train, and retain the skilled workforce needed to meet future needs. Expanding career pathways and workforce opportunities is essential to ensuring the long-term success of tree care businesses and the communities they serve.

✓ **TCIA supports policies and programs that strengthen workforce development, expand career opportunities, and promote the long-term sustainability of the tree care profession.**

Why It Matters

People are the foundation of the tree care industry. Employers across the country continue to face challenges recruiting and retaining qualified workers, while many students and job seekers remain unaware of the rewarding careers available in tree care.

A strong workforce pipeline helps businesses grow, supports safer worksites, and creates meaningful career opportunities in communities across the country. Investing in workforce development today helps ensure the industry remains strong, competitive, and prepared for future demand.

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

- Expand access to qualified workers through legal and reliable workforce pathways.
- Strengthen workforce recruitment and retention efforts.
- Promote apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities.
- Support career and technical education programs.
- Increase awareness of careers in arboriculture and vegetation management.
- Encourage workforce training and professional development.
- Reduce barriers to entering skilled trades and green industry careers.

A strong workforce supports safer worksites, stronger businesses, and a more resilient tree care industry.

Areas of Focus

Workforce Access and H-2B Programs

Many tree care companies depend on seasonal employees to meet customer demand, respond to storms, and support peak workloads.

Programs such as H-2B help employers address workforce needs while creating lawful pathways to employment.

☑ TCIA supports workforce policies that provide reliable access to qualified workers while maintaining appropriate employee protections.

Immigration Modernization

The tree care industry relies on a skilled and diverse workforce, yet many employers continue to struggle to fill open positions.

☑ TCIA supports practical workforce solutions that improve workforce availability, strengthen labor market stability, and help employers meet long-term staffing needs.

Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning

Apprenticeships provide valuable opportunities for individuals to gain hands-on experience while developing industry-recognized skills. These programs help workers build rewarding careers and help employers develop and retain talent.

☑ TCIA supports efforts to expand apprenticeship opportunities and increase awareness of work-based learning pathways within the tree care profession.

Career and Technical Education

Career and technical education programs help students discover rewarding careers in the skilled trades and green industry. Tree care offers career paths in arboriculture, equipment operation, utility vegetation management, plant health care, safety leadership, and business management.

☑ TCIA supports educational initiatives that connect students, educators, and employers while building awareness of industry opportunities.

Industry Awareness and Career Pathways

Many prospective workers are unfamiliar with the opportunities available in tree care.

The profession offers competitive wages, opportunities for advancement, entrepreneurship, meaningful outdoor work, and the ability to make a visible difference in local communities.

☑ TCIA supports outreach efforts that promote the value and professionalism of careers in tree care.

Training, Credentialing, and Professional Development

Ongoing education is essential to maintaining a skilled and adaptable workforce. Training, professional credentials, and continuing education opportunities help workers enhance their skills, improve safety performance, and advance their careers.

☑ **TCIA supports workforce development programs that strengthen professionalism and support career growth throughout the industry.**

Looking Forward

The future of the tree care industry depends on its ability to attract, train, and retain talented professionals.

By expanding workforce pathways, increasing awareness of career opportunities, and supporting education and training programs, the industry can continue to build a skilled workforce prepared to meet future challenges.

Investing in people today will help ensure the tree care industry continues to provide essential services while creating rewarding careers for generations to come.

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.