

*Proc. Fla. State Hort. Soc.* 117:287-288. 2004.

## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE TREE TRIMMER LICENSING PROGRAM IN BROWARD COUNTY**

HENRIQUE MAYER<sup>1</sup>  
*University of Florida, IFAS  
Miami-Dade County Extension  
18710 SW 288 Street  
Homestead, FL 33030*

*Additional index words.* pruning trees, Broward County tree ordinance

*Abstract.* **The Tree Trimmer Program started in Broward County in September 2001 with the goal of improving industry professionalism. The Broward County Extension Division is respon-**

sible for training. Training is offered in English, Spanish and Creole. The Broward County Department of Planning and Environmental Protection issues the license and handles enforcement. In order to obtain the Tree Trimmer License, applicants need to submit the following documents: proof of experience; a credit reference; corporation/partnership verification; insurance; two photos; and the license fee.

Phase I of the program consists of 4 hours of instruction, using slides and a video which cover basic tree terminology and biology; good and bad pruning practices; a written pruning exercise; and a quick field review. This is followed by a 50-question exam. To pass the exam for phase I, participants must answer 35 questions correctly. Phase II is designed to augment the initial curriculum and satisfy continuing education needs of licensed tree trimmers. It explores topics such as hazard tree assessment, tree repair, and customer relation-

---

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author; e-mail: hmayer@ifas.ufl.edu.

Table 1. Tree Trimmer class participation as of June 1, 2004.

Year	English			Spanish			Creole			Total by Year		
	Pass	Fail	Total	Pass	Fail	Total	Pass	Fail	Total	Pass	Fail	Total
2001	612	28	640	57	13	70	100	6	106	769	47	816
2002	542	38	580	101	34	135	48	0	48	691	72	763
2003	285	25	310	46	18	64	8	8	16	339	51	390
2004	60	3	63	24	2	26	1	0	1	85	5	90
Total	1499	94	1593	228	67	295	157	14	171	1884	175	2059

**ships. As of June 2004, 2,059 participants had taken the Phase I exam, with 1,884 passing (91.5%). As of May 2004, 220 participants have taken the Phase II exam. A certificate of completion is issued to participants who pass the exam.**

In 2001, the Broward County Board of County Commissioners approved an ordinance intended to more closely regulate commercial tree trimming activities. One of the features of this ordinance was a licensing requirement to ensure that tree trimming work was done competently and correctly. It was also aimed at improving the health of the trees and public safety.

The Broward County Extension Education Division developed and implemented a training curriculum to support the licensing program (now referred to as the Phase I Training Program). Dr. Michael Orfanedes, former Extension Agent, developed a Tree Trimming curriculum in English. Henry Mayer, former Extension Agent Program Assistant, developed a Spanish language version. Phase I consists of 4-h of instruction covering basic tree terminology and biology, good and bad pruning practices, and types of pruning cuts, subordination, over lifting, hat-racking, and pruning palms. These were covered using 150 slides (mostly taken in Broward County), an International Society of Arboriculture video, a written pruning exercise, and a quick field review. The exam consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. To pass the exam for Phase I, participants must answer 35 questions correctly. Numerous classes have been presented over the past years by Extension to help clients prepare for the licensing examination. As of June 2004, a total of 2,059 participants had taken the exam, with 1,884 passing (91.5%). Table 1 illustrates the passing rate for this exam by language of the class.

In order to obtain the Tree Trimmer License, the applicant needs to submit to the Department of Planning and Environmental Protection (DPEP), Biological Resources Division the following documents: a certificate of insurance for general liability (\$300,000.00) to include bodily injury and property damage; proof of adequate workers' compensation as required by law; an affidavit of training regarding required OSHA safety regulations; the license fee (\$230.00 per two years); two recent photos; and proof of basic training in

proper pruning practices. DPEP issues a Class A or Class B license depending on one's qualifications as described below:

Class A License for persons or applicants with an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certification or certification by the American Society of Consulting Arborists.

Class B License for persons or applicants without certification. For this group, a certificate of successful completion of the 4-hour training program provided by the Broward County Extension Division is needed.

After the applicant submits all the paperwork, Broward County will issue a Broward County Tree Trimmer License valid for a maximum of two years that will expire on 31 Aug. of the year following the year of issuance. In order to conduct business in Broward County, all license holders shall have the following information displayed on either side of each vehicle used to conduct business within Broward County: (1) the trade name, symbol or logo of the sole proprietor or business organization, (2) the telephone number, and (3) the license number of the individual operating as a sole proprietor or the license number of the business organization. The information must be in bold letters and numerals at least one and one-half (1-½) inches high and affixed to the vehicle in such a manner so as to be readily distinguishable from a distance of not less than ten (10) meters or thirty-two feet (32'). As of May 2004, there were 68 Class A Tree Trimmer and 421 Class B Tree Trimmers licensed by Broward County.

A Phase II Training program has been designed to augment the material presented in the initial curriculum. Although some of the material presented in Phase I is briefly reviewed, the Phase II program is intended to satisfy continuing education needs of licensed tree trimmers by exploring topics such as hazard tree assessment, tree repair and customer relationships. As of May 2004, 220 people have participated in the Phase II program.

#### Literature Cited

- Fitzpatrick, G. 2003. Broward County Tree Trimmer Licensing Ordinance Phase 2 Training Class Curriculum. 35 pp.  
 Orfanedes M. and H. Mayer. 2001. Broward County Tree Trimmer Study Guide. 29 pp.