

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Urban Forestry Specialist GRADE: 24 DATE: 1/8/2024
SERIES: Natural Science CODE: 2392 EEO: Professional FLSA: Exempt

Class Definition:

Under direction, performs complex professional arboriculture/urban forestry work to develop and manage diverse and comprehensive urban forestry programs for the care of trees and forested areas on a county-wide basis. Responsibilities include performing tree inspections for health and safety, managing green waste recycling, implementing specialized tree preservation techniques, and maintaining a landscape tree inventory and tree cultivation plan. Maintains detailed inventory of trees located on Commission property. Provides tree care practices that ensure public safety and the health, vigor, and ecological and environmental benefit of trees; utilizes a tree inventory plan to access and improve species diversity, manage the resource effectively and ensure climate change mitigation to improve environmental, economic and social equity on parkland; provides technical assistance to managers and staff. Inspects, diagnoses and determines appropriate treatment and protection for a wide variety of tree species and other plants and identifies proper care and maintenance per industry standards. Contacts are with the public, citizen groups, community organizations, employees, and special interest groups pertaining to urban forestry programs. Some work may be confidential or sensitive. Carries out work in accordance with standard urban forestry policies and procedures. Incumbent may vary existing policies to some degree to deal with specific situations not specifically covered. As an individual contributor, work results in completed assignments that have a direct impact on matters of the area(s) of assignment. Applies knowledge of tree identification and taxonomy; arboriculture and urban forestry; pesticides/integrated pest management; park and business administration; regulatory compliance and industry standards including Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and American National Standards Institute (ANSI); and International Society of Arboriculture tree assessment and care practices. Independently performs various types of research and analyses and solves regularly occurring problems, including a range of non-standard problems. Interacts with people inside and outside the organization to exchange information, coordinate, instruct, guide, advise and obtain agreement or compliance or achieve other desired actions. Performs other duties, as assigned.

Work is assigned in terms of ongoing functional responsibilities, requirements of specific assignments and anticipated problems. Incumbent independently plans and carries out the work in conformance with established policies and procedures and accepted arboriculture practices, and resolves commonly encountered problems by selecting and applying, or adapting and adjusting, the appropriate guidelines. Incumbent is to keep the team leader and supervisor informed of assignment status, non-routine problems/issues, and seeks assistance for unusual administrative matters. Work is evaluated in terms of effectiveness in meeting objectives, quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and other factors.

Examples of Important Duties (Estimated Percentages):

1. Core Functions (±70%)

- Develops, recommends, and implements goals, objectives and standards for projects and programs ensuring performance, quality, and maintenance. Inspects, diagnoses and

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determines appropriate treatment and protection for a wide variety of trees and plant species. Identifies proper tree care and maintenance per industry standards; maintains inventory of trees located on Commission property. Obtains estimates for contractors performing work on parkland, coordinates work as needed; performs quality assurance to ensure work is completed per park standards. Prepares requests for proposals, bid specifications and oversees and approves the work of contractors and authorization for payment.

- Manages green waste recycling program and oversees operations including production of mulch, compost and wood products.
- Provides expert technical assistance and arboricultural consulting to park planning and development projects and outside requests for construction permits; reviews and comments on projects. Leads or participates on project teams during planning, development and construction phases. Conducts field inspections utilizing specialized tools and equipment (e.g., resistance drill, mallets, air spade) and Commission vehicles to ensure projects are compliant with construction plans and provides decisions in the field when there are changes to the project for tree protection and mitigation. Provides reviews, comments and advice to park managers, project coordinators and construction managers in areas of expertise.
- Inspects, diagnoses, recommends and initiates treatments to manage urban forest pest and disease issues. Conducts studies to ensure species diversity, resilience of the urban forest to climate change and selects best plants, controls pests, develops standards for plant care and maintenance, and meets program objectives using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies. Ensures best management practices are employed.
- Participates in interagency committees for the purpose of coordinating and developing programs, resolving problems of mutual interest, or exchanging information. Responds to, investigates, and resolves inquiries and complaints involving highly sensitive issues and problems.
- Recommends approval of supplies and materials purchases. Reviews product catalogs and meets with vendors to obtain price quotes and prepare purchase requests. Conducts difficult research, analyzes and maintains data, and develops programs. Identifies trends and, as appropriate, incorporates into work programs. Prepares documentation, records, reports, and other correspondence.
- Leads and directs staff or contractors engaged in high-risk tree and limb removal, pruning or other specialized tree work; determines equipment and supplies needed to complete work in the most efficient manner.
- Develops safety protocols and practices for staff to reduce occurrence of incidents and accidents and promote a healthy and safe work environment.

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2. Other ($\pm 30\%$)

- Prepares detailed budget requests with detailed justifications; manages and controls budget.
- Utilizes specialized equipment to assess tree decay, estimate tree stability, and hazard risks.
- Routinely uses field equipment and specialized software (e.g., TreeKeeper) to geolocate individual tree locations, collect condition data and other characteristics of individual trees, and generate work orders. Uses GIS technology and various associated programs to manage planted assets in parks. Responsible for mapping, data collection, management and collaboration with GIS Management Team to help provide information to database and dashboard platforms. Helps train and coordinate other staff within work program to track and input appropriate data.
- Utilizes statistics to conduct analysis assessing structure, composition, and function of trees in urban forests to ensure progress toward industry-standard benchmarks and Departmental tree diversity goals. In response to analysis outcomes, develops action plans for enhancing urban forests on parkland.
- Prepares visual materials such as charts, maps and graphs for presentations; conducts forestry-related tours or instructional sessions. Presents arboriculture/urban forestry programs to the public, citizen groups, community organizations, employees, and special interest groups. May represent the Commission in court testifying as an expert witness.
- Develops, oversees and schedules specialized staff training for tree care, chainsaw operation, safety, aerial rescue, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid.
- Maintains inventory of real property, fleet vehicles, equipment, tools, supplies and materials pertinent to areas of responsibility. Maintains safety and legal compliance documentation.
- Leads a group of employees that involves planning, scheduling, and assigning work. Initiates recognition and disciplinary actions; and approves timecards and leave requests. Participates in training staff on tools and equipment.
- Maintains knowledge of and evaluates new arboricultural methods, equipment and technology through review of technical literature, attendance at professional seminars and conferences, and exchanges of professional information.

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Important Worker Characteristics:

- A. Knowledge of (1) tree identification and taxonomy; (2) arboriculture and urban forestry; (3) pesticides/integrated pest management; (4) park/business administration*; (5) regulatory compliance and industry standards including Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and American National Standards Institute (ANSI); (6) International Society of Arboriculture tree assessment and care practices; and (7) Commission organization, policies and procedures*.

** Typically acquired or fully developed primarily after employment in this job class.*

- B. Skill and ability to (1) interpret and write technical reports and correspondence; (2) organize work efficiently and effectively; (3) safely use and operate urban forestry tools and equipment for tree maintenance (i.e., handsaws and mechanical devices); (4) prepare arboricultural reports and recommendations identifying tree cultivation processes and procedures; and (5) perform First Aide, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED).
- C. Skill in problem solving to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem. This includes skill in identifying subtle aspects of problems and developing solutions. Examples include analyzing and evaluating data and reading blueprints; solving complex problems; and performing math calculations (i.e., determine plot radius and area, interpretation of slope).
- D. Skill in communication to understand verbal and written information (including facts, assertions and arguments), draw inferences, form hypotheses and develop logical arguments and to express such information in writing so that others will understand and, at times, be convinced or persuaded. Examples include providing expert technical assistance and arboricultural consulting to park planning or development projects and outside requests for construction permits; reviewing and commenting on projects; reading blueprints, maps, graphs or data structures which identify current inventories of trees or potential sites for planting of trees; participating in interagency committees for the purpose of coordinating and developing programs, resolving problems of mutual interest, or exchanging information; and responding to inquiries or complaints involving highly sensitive issues.
- E. Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented manner; this includes skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships and working as a member or a leader of a team.
- F. Skill in using a computer, modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software, and specialized software (such as GIS/GPS).

Minimum Qualifications (MQs):

1. Bachelor's Degree in Urban Forestry, Arboriculture or any related field.

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2. Two (2) years of progressively responsible professional forestry, arboriculture experience.
3. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total six (6) years.
4. Certified Arborist by the International Society of Arboriculture.
5. An appropriate Maryland Department of Agriculture Pesticide Applicator Certificate is required within 12 months of employment.
6. Valid driver's license in accordance with both State and Commission rules and regulations. Driver's license must be unencumbered by restrictions, revocations, suspensions or points that could limit the employee's ability to drive Commission vehicles or perform driving duties required of their position.

Working Conditions:

Works in indoor and outdoor settings. May work weekends, evenings and holidays. On call 24 hours for emergencies. Some driving required. Work may require long periods of standing and walking, and recurring bending, stooping, reaching and similar activities. Work may also include frequent lifting of moderately heavy items weighing less than 49 pounds. Work involves exposure to weather, dirt, waste, odors, chemicals, pesticides, wildlife and insects. Work requires special safety precautions or protective clothing and equipment.