

Tree Inspector

FLSA Status: Covered
Bargaining Unit: Portland City Laborers 483 (PCL)

General Summary

Positions in this class are responsible for applying City Tree Code regulations through plan review and on-site tree condition assessments, and tree risk and tree preservation field inspections to review, process and issue non-development and development tree permits, investigate tree code violations and enforce tree code regulations citywide.

Tree Inspector - 30000250

Distinguishing Characteristics

The journey level of this class typically inspects trees and sites for compliance with codes, hazard assessment, and other conditions, and reviews site plans and issues permits and violations for compliance with City Tree Code regulations in both development and non-development.

Typical Duties/Examples of Work

1. Interprets and applies the City's Tree code for Tree Code compliance and permit issuance for non-development and development trees.
2. Utilizes City permit database to enter collected field data, monitor, track, and update non-development Tree Code cases and development review; composes written correspondence, and issues formal permitting documents.
3. Performs independent tree inspections and tree condition assessments. Collects field data, verifies site conditions to assess trees for risk, health, condition, structure, insects and diseases. Identifies hazards, prepares and posts nuisance abatement notifications..
4. Investigates complaints regarding Tree Code violations by inspecting premises, gathering evidence, researching sources, and determining violations; meets with a variety of interested parties to explain actions, interpret and communicate codes; assesses applicable codes and develops solutions and recommendations for corrective action in difficult or complex code cases; tracks and manages cases; makes referrals to appropriate departments and agencies.
5. Maintains accurate records of conditions of inspected trees and actions taken. Issues written requirements for future actions, updates permit database records and documents public feedback into the database.

6. Inspects development sites and associated right-of-way for tree planting requirements, tree preservation requirements, tree removal proposals and tree code violations in accordance with the Tree Code.
7. Performs plan review by interpreting site plans for compliance with Tree Code regulations, impacts on trees and the natural environment, and feasibility of actual implementation. Provides technical expertise and detailed written responses to development proposals. Reviews and responds to technical analyses regarding trees throughout the development process.
8. Writes detailed work orders for urban forestry crews indicating priority and estimated scope of project.
9. Composes written correspondence and communicates with other bureaus, contractors, the public and interest groups on the compliance and education of municipal tree codes and its interaction with other city codes.
10. Performs plan review, on-site tree inventory assessments, tree inspections and issues permits for compliance with the Tree Code to citywide capital improvement projects.
11. Provides information, interpretations and assistance to developers, property owners, the public and other City bureaus regarding Tree Code regulations. Reviews proposal applications to ensure they are complete; prepares plan mark-ups for applicants.
12. Gathers information and represents the City in adversarial proceedings; code hearings, Urban Forestry Commission appeals, meetings with other City staff, developers and agencies. Monitors and enforces decisions of hearings and reviews.
13. Occasionally participates in, and supports, urban forestry education and outreach programs including public presentations and training workshops.
14. May respond to after-hours emergency tree response to perform tree condition assessments when additional support is necessary.
15. Attends and participates in training sessions and conferences relevant to urban forestry.
16. Performs related duties as assigned.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of: urban forestry and arboriculture; municipal codes and regulations; professional tree assessment standards; tree health assessment and evaluation

from tree roots to canopy; industry standards and best management practices; tree risk assessment; advanced level of knowledge of tree biology; hazards associated with tree damage in storms and natural disasters.

Ability to: safely work with and around trees; communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; present ideas and requirements clearly and persuasively; negotiate, mediate and facilitate challenging conflicts with composure and professionalism; interpret and apply municipal codes and regulations; educate the public and other bureaus on proper arboricultural practices; establish effective working relationships with a diversity of others; organize work; schedule and set priorities; exercise tact and diplomacy in dealing with co-workers and the public; prepare reports, write letters, and input and retrieve information using computer software.

Skill in: inspecting, assessing and evaluating tree conditions and hazards; interpreting and applying codes and professional standards; efficiently managing multiple permit requests and reading and interpreting development plans; explaining technical information requirements to knowledgeable and lay persons; interpreting city code regulations and applying them to specific situations; writing business letters and arborist reports; providing consultancy services regarding trees in development situations; communicating effectively and using sound judgement, operating a computer and utilizing job-related software.

Special Requirements

ISA Certified Arborist certification; Valid Driver's License and acceptable driving record; EHAP certification and pesticide public applicator license or pesticide consultant license within six months of hire; some positions may require additional endorsements, certifications or licenses.

Classification History:

Adopted: 2-03-99:

Class created as a result of DCTU Classification and Compensation Study

1998-99. This class is composed of the following classes:

4114 Tree Inspector Adopted: 11-01-93

June 2009 - Change Job Class number from 4112 to 30000250, due to system change.

January 2012 – Classification removed from Arborist series document and created separate Tree Inspector document.

January 2014 – Updated job duties and added ISA Arborist Certification

August 2014 – Updated job duties - removed aerial rescue duties

July 2019 - Updated job duties and clarified plan review and code enforcement responsibilities.

Tree Inspector, Senior – 30003353

Distinguishing Characteristics

The lead level of this class typically performs all class duties and in addition serves as a lead over other Tree Inspectors. It is distinguished from the Tree Inspector class by the lead assignment.

Typical Duties/Examples of Work

1. Provides lead direction to subordinate inspectors and trainees as assigned, including scheduling, coordinating, assigning, reviewing and overseeing the completion of a variety of work to ensure timely and accurate completion.
2. Determines resource needs for work unit(s) or special projects; may research and recommend new techniques, processes and best management practices to be utilized and makes recommendations regarding their implementation.
3. Provides programmatic expertise and quality control oversight for tree permitting and regulation activities.
4. Reviews the work of and provides training and guidance to assigned staff and provides input to performance evaluation
5. Monitors work unit(s) and prepares reports.
6. Performs related duties as assigned.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of: effective principles and practices of leadership; advanced level of knowledge of tree biology, tree physiology, pathology, and species identification, advanced knowledge of municipal codes and regulations including Title 11 and Title 33 of the City of Portland code; advanced knowledge of permitting database.

Ability to: provide effective lead direction to subordinate staff, schedule and assign the work of others, prepare reports; understand, interpret and explain and apply complex codes and regulations.

Skill in: establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with management, subordinates, public and private officials, and the general public; providing effective training, mentoring and lead direction to subordinate staff, including assigning and reviewing work; providing technical guidance to others

Special Requirements

Same as Tree Inspector and ISA TRAQ (Tree Risk Assessment Qualification), EHAP certification and pesticide public applicator license or pesticide consultant license at time of hire

Classification History:

Adopted: 07-03-2019

Working Conditions

Work in this class is performed in a field and office environment. Incumbent is required to negotiate rough and steep terrain; to lift up to 100 pounds; to work outdoors at times in inclement weather; to work in and around traffic; to be exposed to hazardous materials;; to work under hazardous conditions; to drive a car for extended periods of time; to be exposed to a variety of potentially hostile, emotional or hazardous contacts with the public via phone, written correspondence and face to face interactions.