



## Certification

### Overview

Use Landscape Industry Certified to lower your workers' compensation insurance rates. Most landscape contractors have seen their worker's compensation insurance rates skyrocket this past year. As an added benefit to supporting the CLT, all companies with new CLTs receive a letter from ILCA that can be given to their brokers to help when shopping for new worker's compensation rates.

This letter details that the company has CLTs on staff and that these individuals have completed a national program based on safety and best practices. This is similar to how a wellness program can help lower health insurance costs. This is just another way ILCA is helping member businesses who support the CLT.

### What is Certification?

It is a voluntary, national, hands-on testing program administered by the Illinois Landscape Contractors Associations (ILCA) that seeks to recognize proficiency in the landscape workforce and upgrade the status of the landscape professional. Certification recognizes those landscape technicians who demonstrate they can meet strict performance and safety standards in installation or maintenance modules.

### What does the test include?

The test is comprised of written and hands-on field tests. ILCA offers applicants a choice of four specialized modules, two in Installation and two in Maintenance.

- Part 1 - Common Core - everyone must complete these basic landscape knowledge/skills which include three written exams and nine field exams.
- Part 2 - Specialized Modules - applicants select a module to match their job skills.

### What are the test problems?

NOTE: Tests with the same suffix (example: 5.21 & 8.21) are the exact same test. You only need to pass the test once and it applies to all relevant certification categories.

### Part 1 Written - Common Core Challenges - everyone must pass.

Written Exams (Test 1.01 - Common Core)

- Safety
- Communication
- Motor Vehicles
- Math
- Reporting

All written questions are offered in English and Spanish

## **Part 2 - Specialty Modules - Select your area of expertise**

### **Softscape Installation**

#### Written Comprehension

- Common Core (1.01)
- Softscape Plan Reading (5.02)
- Softscape Horticultural Principles (5.03)
- Irrigation Components (5.04)

#### Field Exams

- Plant ID (problem# 5.21)
- Sod Installation (5.51)
- Program Controller (5.22)
- Lateral Repair and Head Adjustment (5.23)
- Tree Planting and Staking (5.24)
- Plant Layout (5.52)
- Rototiller Operation (5.53)

### **Hardscape Installation**

#### Written Comprehension

- Common Core (1.01)
- Hardscape Plan Reading (6.05)
- Hardscape Principles and Calculations (6.06)

#### Field Exams

- Chainsaw (6.25)
- Grading and Drainage (6.61)
- Instrument (6.62)
- Paver Installation (6.63)
- Skid-Steer Operation (6.64)

### **Turf Maintenance**

#### Written Comprehension

- Common Core (1.01)
- Irrigation Components and Principles (8.07)
- Turfgrass Maintenance Principles (8.08)
- Turfgrass Maintenance Calculations (8.09)

#### Field Test

- Program Controller (8.22)
- Lateral Repair and Head Adjustment (8.23)
- 21" Mower (8.81)
- Intermediate Walk-Behind Mower (8.82)
- Aerator (8.85)
- Edger and Trimmer (8.84)
- Riding Mower (8.83)
- Turf Fertilizer (8.86)
- Power Blower (8.26)

### **Ornamental Maintenance**

#### Written Comprehension

- Common Core (1.01)
- Irrigation Components and Principles (9.07)

- Ornamental Maintenance Horticultural Principles (9.12)
- Ornamental Maintenance Calculations (9.14)

#### Field Test

- Plant ID (9.21)
- Program Controller (9.22)
- Lateral Repair and Head Adjustment (9.23)
- Tree Planting and Staking (9.24)
- Chainsaw (9.25)
- Power Blowers (9.26)
- Pruning (9.91)

#### **What can I expect on test day?**

Written exams consist of timed, multiple choice exams which are offered several times throughout the year (not offered the day of the field exam). The annual field exam is a series of timed, hands-on stations, monitored by one or more judges, requiring applicants to perform a variety of landscape functions. At the end of each timed problem, applicants rotate to another work station.

#### **Test Overview and Examination Changes**

The National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) has recently made changes to the certification process. These changes impact both new and returning applicants (retests). Please look over these documents to determine how certification changes may impact you.

#### **What Does it Cost?**

The fee for new applicants is \$300 for ILCA members and \$450 for non-members. If an applicant does not pass on the first attempt, there is a \$35 (\$80 non-member) retake fee per test problem.

#### **Study Guides and Preparing for the Test**

Applicants may purchase study guides prepared for maintenance and installation. Study Guides are available for \$70 with 20% S&H fee and 7.75% sales tax (total = \$89.43 per manual or \$178.88 for the set). Order through ILCA at 630-472-2851 or [information@ilca.net](mailto:information@ilca.net) or via our online publications order form.

#### **Recertification**

CLTs must maintain their certification by earning 24 Continuing Education Units during 2 calendar years. Most ILCA educational events (including iLandscape) are worth recertification credit. For an overview of the recertification requirements visit NALP's website at <https://www.landscapeprofessionals.org/>.