



organized August 16, 1922

The Connecticut Tree Protective Association, Inc.

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

CTPA to Celebrate the Centennial of the Arborist Law with a Statewide Tree Planting

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This fall, the Connecticut Tree Protective Association will plant a white oak tree in every city and town within Connecticut. This tree planting is in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the passage of the state's Arborist Law. This law, currently comprising Section 23-61a-m of Connecticut's General Statutes, requires that arborists in the state are licensed. It also establishes the foundation for proper tree care. Because of this law, knowledge and practice of tree care are notably better within the State of Connecticut than elsewhere in the country. For a state that values its trees, this is an accomplishment worth celebrating.

The original Arborist Law was passed at a time when Connecticut's forests were still re-growing and in which the gypsy moth and the chestnut blight were rapidly becoming major tree problems. It was then that the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, among others, recognized a developing problem with hacks and charlatans selling tree care services which were often no good and sometimes downright dangerous. The first Arborist Law, then called the Tree Expert Law, required anyone who sold their services as a tree expert to demonstrate their knowledge of trees and of tree care through a rigorous examining process. It was this testing process that laid the basis for the qualifications that everyone must demonstrate if he or she seeks to sell his or her services as an arborist.

This is the law that has seen us through Dutch elm disease, the Hurricane of '38, the introduction of pesticides to tree care, the continued spread of the gypsy moth, the emerald ash borer and more. It is also the law that has encouraged the growth of arboriculture as a highly skilled, deeply knowledgeable and scrupulously safe profession. That last point is key. The mishandling of trees takes many lives every year. Arborists know this and have safety deeply ingrained into their professional practice, to limit the dangers to themselves and their co-workers and to the public at large. It is one of the features of arboriculture that distinguishes the professional arborist from the non-arborist. It is also one of the provisions included in the Arborist Law.

The Connecticut Tree Protective Association owes its existence to the original Arborist Law. It was quickly recognized by those who supported passage of the law that there needed to be an organization that would help train those who sought this license. Hence, the CTPA was organized in 1922. Today, CTPA has over 800 members, the vast majority of whom are licensed as arborists by the State of Connecticut. Altogether, the state currently has about 1,000 individuals licensed as arborists.

As CTPA looks back on this record of accomplishment, it is grateful that the Connecticut General Assembly had the foresight to pass this first Tree Expert Law. It was a first, not just in Connecticut but also in the nation. Today, Connecticut is still one of the few states that have a law requiring the licensing of arborists. CTPA sees this as a real testament to the importance of trees in Connecticut. It is

also a statement that, in Connecticut, work should be done the right way, by the right people, with the right knowledge and skills.

It is also right that the CTPA donates a tree to each of Connecticut's 169 cities and towns, so that it may share with them its appreciation for the support arboriculture receives from the State Legislature. Individual licensed arborists will work with each municipality to locate a proper place for planting this tree. These arborists will also help with its nurturing and growth over the years. Individual announcements on when this tree planting will occur can be expected from the cities and towns themselves. CTPA acknowledges that 100 years is a long time. Of course, as it plants these commemorative trees, the Association also notes, "100 years is not old for an oak, particularly for one growing strong and solid, rooted in good soil".

For further information, please visit the CTPA website at [www.CTPA.org](http://www.CTPA.org).

Also, contact the CTPA Executive Secretary, Cathy Dvorksy, at 203-484-2512 or [cathy@ctpa.org](mailto:cathy@ctpa.org).

See also: <https://ctpa.org/wp-content/uploads/Arbor-Law-Background.pdf>

The CTPA would also like to thank Planters' Choice Nursery of Newtown and Watertown, for their generous support of this tree planting effort.