

# AERIAL LIFT OPERATOR UTILITY ARBORICULTURE



## JOB DESCRIPTION

The aerial lift operator is a journeyman-level position in the utility arboriculture profession. Duties include pruning trees for line clearance, tree removal, felling, and can include herbicide and tree growth regulator application. Aerial lift operators may also be climbers.

## TYPICAL BACKGROUND

Workers typically begin as ground workers then complete an established apprenticeship.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Workers must be in good physical condition. High school diploma is preferred, but not always required. Ability to get Commercial Drivers License (CDL) may be required.

## EDUCATION/TRAINING NEEDS

- Orientation to the tree care profession
- General work site safety and hazard recognition
- Electric hazard awareness
- Electrical theory
- Herbicide and tree growth regulators
- Aerial lift operations
- Selection and use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Back injury prevention
- Vehicle safety, safe operation, and driving
- Understanding work orders and plans
- Job briefings
- Emergency procedures
- Chain saw use and safety
- Chipper use and safety
- Basic knots and rope operation for rigging
- Pruning principles and techniques
- Tree identification

## EDUCATION TRAINING MATERIALS

- ISA ArborMaster Video Series and Workbook: *Chain Saw Use and Safety*
- ANSI Z133.1 Safety Standards
- NAA Tailgate Safety Program
- Electrical Hazards Awareness Program
- NAA Pocket Guides:
- NAA Video: *Back Injury Prevention*
- NAA Video: *Chipper Use and Safety*
- NAA Video: *Chain Saw Selection and Maintenance*
- Best Management Practice: Pruning
- FANDEX Tree Identification Guide
- OSHA 29CFR 1910.269.
- ACRT: *Line Clearance Tree Trimmer Manual*
- ISA: *A Handbook of Hazard Tree Evaluation for Utility Arborists*
- Shigo: *Pruning Trees Near Electric Utility Lines*

## CERTIFICATION/LICENSES

Commercial Drivers License (CDL) recommended; Most states require certification of training to work near energized power lines; ISA Certified Arborist and advanced Utility Specialist certification recommended

## TYPICAL FUTURE CAREER PATHS

Climbers usually progress to the position of foreperson/supervisor. Can also progress to pre-inspector, or other management positions. Some workers may switch to other aspects of tree care such as commercial or municipal.