

# 2026 MAA Update

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DEPARTMENT OF  
Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry

# 2025 Arborist exam data

- 189 individuals were scheduled to take the exam(s)  
157 passed  
10 did not pass  
6 passed one and not the other  
16 no show, no call

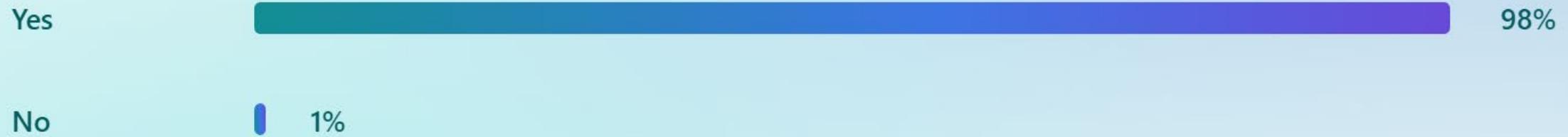
173 people took the following exams:  
31 Landscape only  
64 Utility only  
78 Both exams



# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

Are you a currently licensed arborist in the State of Maine?



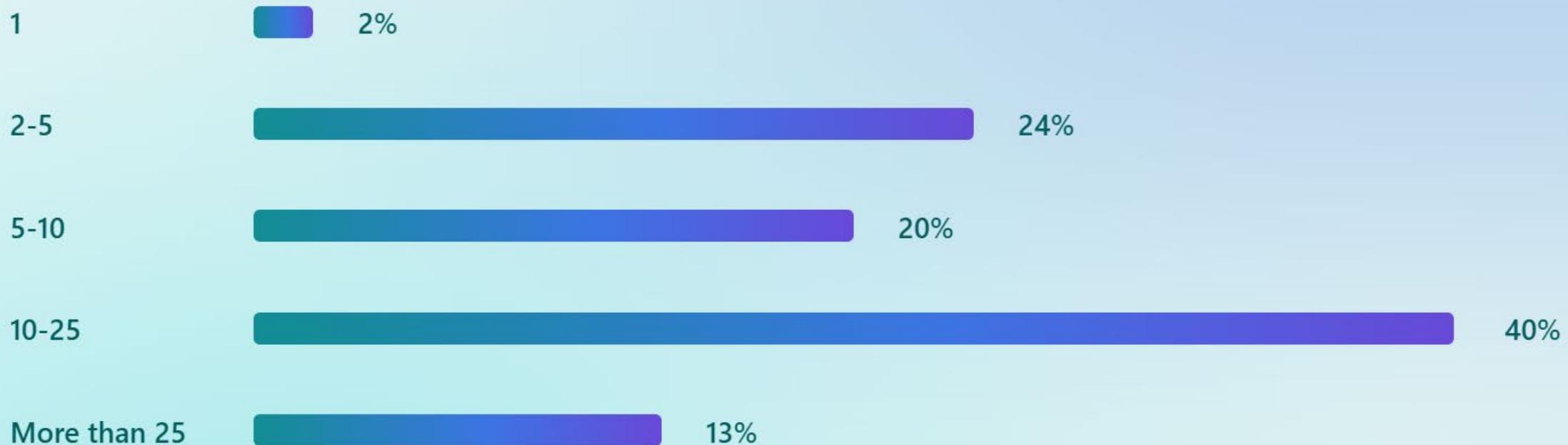
Treemap

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# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

## How many years have you been licensed as an arborist in Maine?



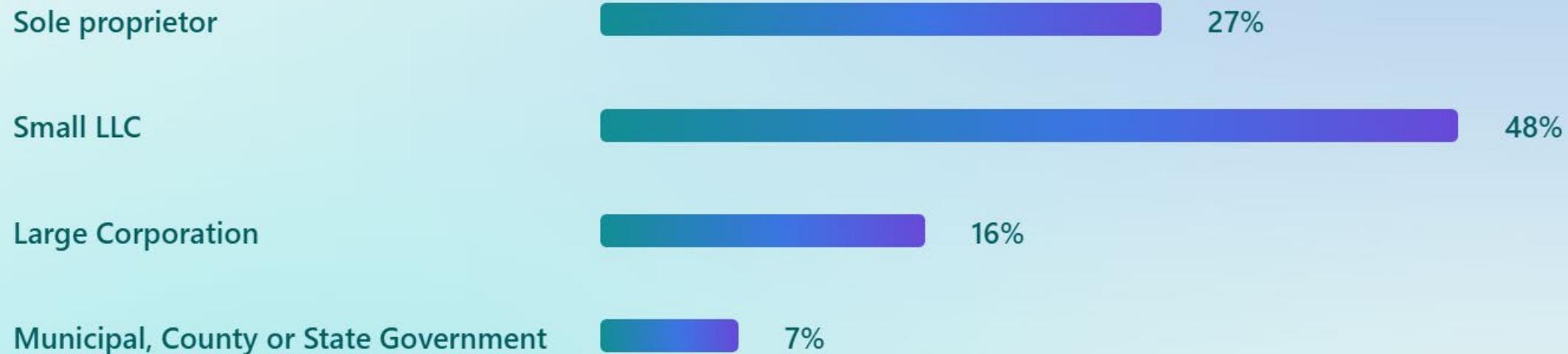
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# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

## What type of business do you own or work for?



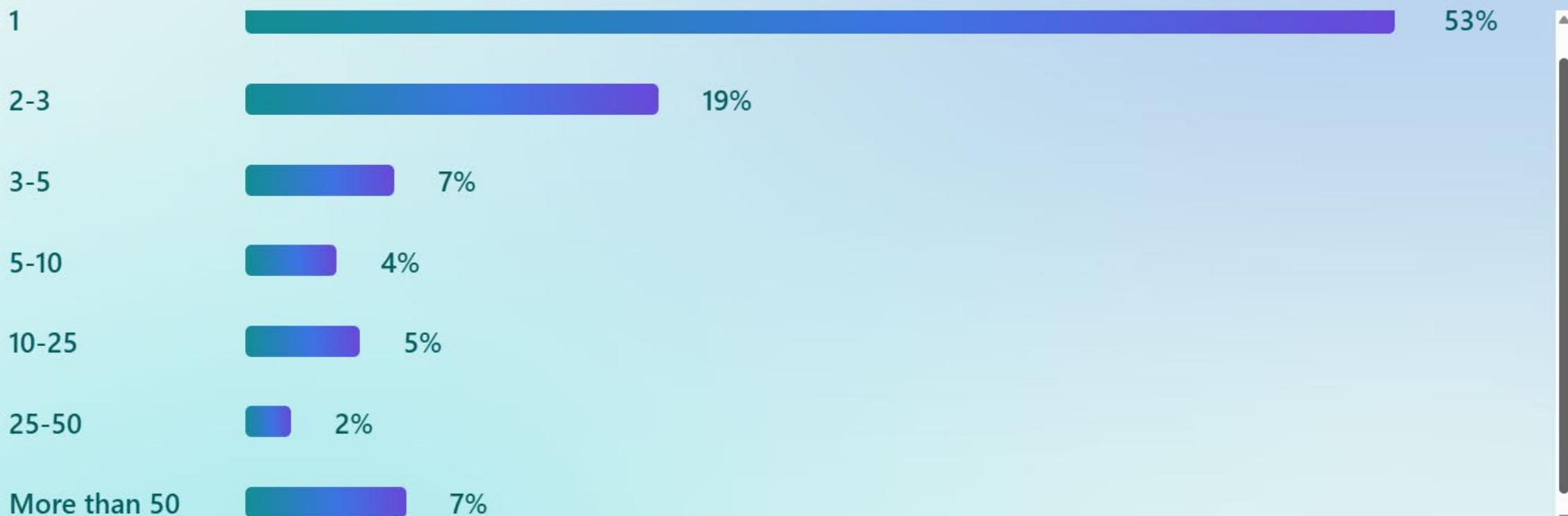
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# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

## How many licensed arborists are employed by your organization?



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# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

Have you ever witnessed unlicensed individuals doing arborist work (treating a tree off the ground or removing trees in situations where people, utilities, or structures are at risk)? If...

**83% said yes**

"Yes york county has many tree cutters that are not  
Arborest's."

"Yes, I have seen at least 20 individuals"

"Yes"

"Approx 6"

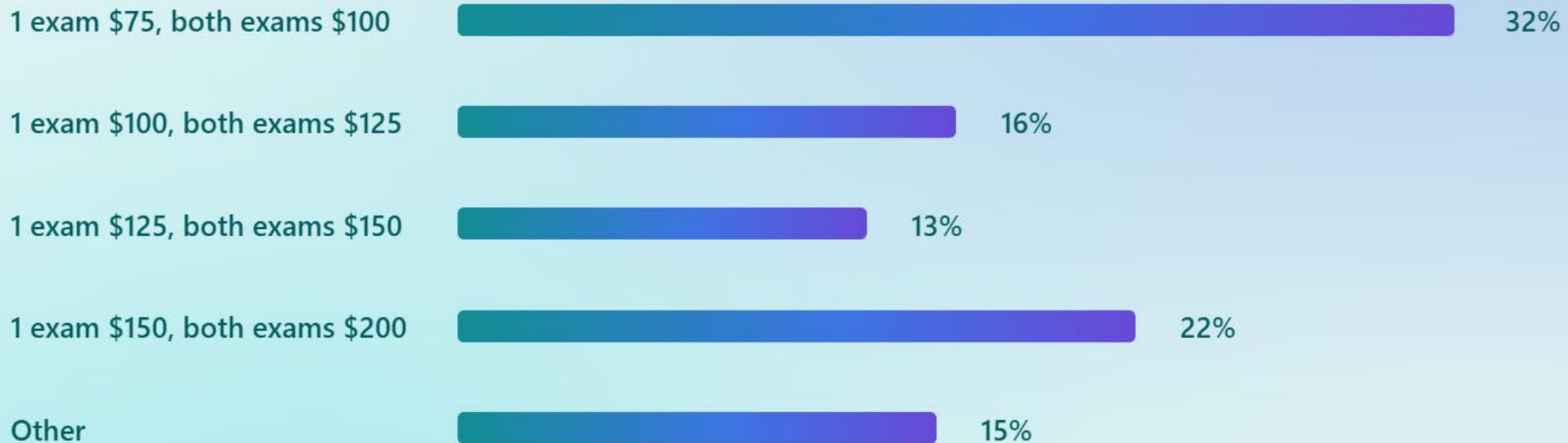
"Yes 5 - 10"



# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

If DACF were to propose raising the annual license fee to improve the Arborist Licensing & Enforcement Program, what is the highest exam fee level you would support? (The current...



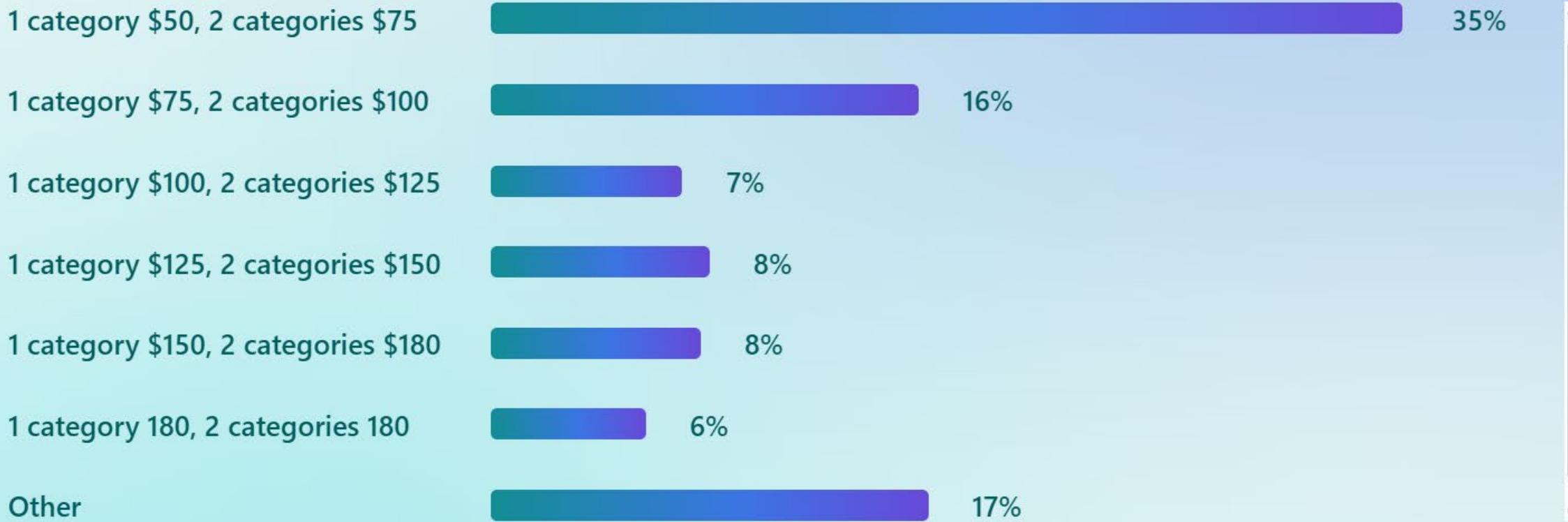
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# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

Please rank the following issues with the highest priority on top.

Need to improve enforcement on unlicensed practice

Need for a continuing education system

Need to improve the exam

Need to consolidate the categories

Need to restrict what the Utility category license can do

No need for any changes



# 2025 Licensed Arborist Survey Results

237 responses submitted

## Are there other comments you would like to provide to help the DACF improve the Arborist Program?

"The only time i have ever used my Licence # was to work for the town which required a Arborest. Other then that you get enough Education cutting trees every day. No need for more Goverment Requirem"

"ISA Exam and CEUs are very well thought out, respected and science based. A great role model."

"A suggestion to add something to the exam or study ma-



# 2025 survey additional comments

Comment	Number of Individuals
CEU Program	31
Enforce current rules	26
Don't raise fees	20
Improve exams - add chipper, climbing & bucket safety	16
Closed book exam	11
Improve public outreach	9
Require ISA exam	5
Add shoreland zoning rules to training	5
EHAP required for Utility Arborists	4
Consolidate license categories	4
Should be extreme penalties/fines	3
Add business license	3



# 2025 survey additional comments

Comment	Number of Individuals
Add business license	3
Online portal for fees and renewals	3
Require experience/apprenticeships/unionized	3
Revoke license if uninsured	2
OSHA inspections/drug testing & BG checks	2
Hold utilities liable for hiring unlicensed arborists	2
Fund enforcement position from fines	1
Increase exam fees	1
Offer more exams with unlimited numbers and retest sooner	1



# 2025 survey additional comments

Comment	Number of Individuals
Require arborist license for tree injection	1
Provide insurance rate incentives for CEUs	1
CLP training for arborists	1
Community college arborist class	1
Add fee for out of state tree companies	1
Reduce the exemptions from licensing	1



# Potential “improvements”

What is the issue?	How could it be improved?	How is it implemented?
<b>Unlicensed practice</b>	Tighten the statutory definition of an arborist and clarify the authority to enforce the law when someone is found practicing without a license.	Submit a bill to update Title 7, Chapter 404, Sections 2173 & 2179. Additionally, we will have to amend 01-001, Chapter 751 Section 9 (A).
<b>Continuing education program</b>	Provide for a position that can develop a program similar to the BPC or Nutrient Management Program	Submit a bill to update Title 7, Chapter 404, Section 2181, as well as rulemaking to establish the CE system, and funding for a Professional Licensing Supervisor position.



# Potential “improvements”

What is the issue?	How could it be improved?	How is it implemented?
<b>Enforcement of licensing requirements.</b>	Provide for a position that can investigate complaints.	Submit a bill to update Title 7, Chapter 404, Sections 2173 and 2179, as well as rulemaking to allow investigation of unlicensed persons performing arborist duties, and funding for a Professional Licensing Supervisor position.
<b>Licensing firms or businesses.</b>	Add a firm license requirement similar to the BPC rules.	Submit a bill to update Title 7, Chapter 404, Section 2179, as well as rulemaking to establish the new firm license standards and fees.



# Potential “improvements”

What is the issue?	How could it be improved?	How is it implemented?
<b>Repealing some exemptions from licensing.</b>	Define “on-site” supervision, require a license for government employees doing routine arborist work, and remove the exemption for highway and general contractors and their subcontractors.	Submit a bill to update Title 7, Chapter 404, Section 2174, as well as rulemaking to define “on-site.”



# What should we do?

- Even without any changes, we will need to raise license and/or exam fees slightly since the budget is heading into the red because of higher study guide costs and increases in personnel costs.
- The current fee structure has been the same for 30 years.
- To add CEUs, better enforcement, and improved exams, it will require raising a significant sum.
- What is the pleasure of the arborist profession?



# 2025 Complaints and inquiries

- 1 complaint from a CEO about cutting in the shoreland zone
- 1 complaint about a municipal arborist who allegedly wasn't removing a hazard tree
- 1 complaint about an unlicensed person putting up advertising signs and door hangers
- 4 complaints about unlicensed practice
- 4 complaints about Facebook ads.



# How to file an arborist complaint

1. First, verify that the individual does not have an arborist license by checking the list of <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/arborist/ArboristList.shtml> or by contacting the division at (207) 287-4515. Also, confirm that the individual is engaged in work or advertising work for which they must be licensed.

*Acceptable* terms for advertising non-licensed arborist work:

- **Pruning, pest management, planting & fertilizing, stump grinding, chipping, bucket truck, house lots, and wood lots cleared**

*Unacceptable* terms for advertising non-licensed arborist work:

- **Tree removal, tree work, climbing service, vista & view clearing, complete tree care, cabling, limbing, difficult tree removal**



# How to file an arborist complaint

1. A person filing a complaint must submit the complaint in writing and provide their contact information\* (name, address, and phone number), and should provide at least one of the following:
  - Your contact information (name, address, phone number, and email address), so we can contact you if we need more information or have questions about the complaint.
  - Contact information, including at least the name and current mailing address for the person named in the complaint,



# How to file an arborist complaint

- Written documentation indicating that an individual is advertising or performing arborist work. This might be in the form of:
  - a **business card, paper advertisement, or truck logo**, or
  - Photographic documentation of persons engaged in arborist work. Pictures must show them actually doing the work without a supervising arborist in the area, or
  - Written report of work being done on site. Include date, location, type of work being done, or
  - A copy of a signed contract indicating certain work was to be completed that required an arborist license.



# How to file an arborist complaint

1. Send your complaint and documentation to Arborist Program, 28 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333, or email the [debbie.davis@maine.gov](mailto:debbie.davis@maine.gov).

