



Ontario Professional  
Foresters Association

# INFORMATION SHEET

## PROFESSIONAL FORESTRY and CERTIFIED ARBORISTS

This information sheet is prepared to help Certified Arborists who are members of the International Society of Arboriculture understand when they can claim exclusion from the requirements of the Professional Foresters Act, 2000 and its regulations (Ontario Regulation 145/01). The Act provides a legal definition of professional forestry in Ontario and defines who can practice professional forestry. A copy of the Act is available on the Ontario Government's e-laws site at: [http://www.elaws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_00p18\\_e.htm](http://www.elaws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_00p18_e.htm)

### What is the “practice of professional forestry”?

The legal definition of the profession of forestry in Ontario is described in Section 3 of the Professional Foresters Act, 2000. It states that professional forestry is the provision of services in relation to the development, management, conservation, and sustainability of forests and urban forests where those services require knowledge, training and experience equivalent to that required to become a member under this Act and includes,

- The designing, specifying or approving of silviculture prescriptions and treatments, including timber harvesting;
- The appraisal, evaluation and certification of forests and urban forests;
- The auditing of forest management practices;
- The assessment of impacts from planned activities on forests and urban forests;
- The classification, inventory and mapping of forests and urban forests;
- The planning and locating of forest transportation systems including forest roads

These are examples and do not represent a complete list of what constitutes the practice of professional forestry. The Act applies to people working in urban forests. Urban forests are defined in Section 3(3) of the Act as “tree dominated vegetation and related features found within an urban area and includes woodlots, plantations, shade trees, fields in various stages of succession, wetland and riparian areas.”

Elements of the practice of Certified Arborists may overlap with the work performed by professional foresters. Where this overlap exists Certified Arborists will not be seen to be practising professional forestry if they are personally conducting certain activities in accordance with exclusions in the Act (Section 3(2)) or Ontario Regulation 145/01.

The following is the OPFA's interpretation of the circumstances under which a Certified Arborist may be able to claim the benefit of the exclusions in subsection 3(2) of the Act:

*Definition of Arboriculture: The cultivation, management, and study of individual trees, shrubs, vines, and other perennial woody plants. It is both a practice and a science. (Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arborist>)*

*Definition of a Certified Arborist: An arborist is an individual trained in the art and science of planting, caring for, and maintaining individual trees and certified through a voluntary process managed by the International Society of Arboriculture (source: <https://www.isaontario.com/content/what-arborist-why-hire-one> ). The exclusion allows a Certified Arborist to personally inventory, manage and prescribe treatments for individual trees, and does not apply to activities on forested areas, including parks and street scapes, where management is done on a scale greater than individual trees.*

If the activity falls within the definition of the practice of professional forestry, and is outside the scope of practice of the Certified Arborist, then the person performing the activity must obtain a certificate of registration under the Act or be supervised by a member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association with the necessary competencies. Where it appears to the OPFA that any person does not comply with any provision of the Act or the regulation, the Association may apply under Section 59 of the Act for a cease and desist order or injunction to the Superior Court of Justice.

For more information on the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA) and membership requirements, please visit our website at: [www.opfa.ca](http://www.opfa.ca)

*This document has been developed to give guidance on exclusions to the Professional Foresters Act, 2000, so that the public interest, and the public expectation of the profession, is served and protected. The OPFA interpretation of this exclusion has been developed to serve as guidance as to the circumstances under which persons may benefit from the exclusion. The above interpretation, in italics, is not a legal definition.*