



# GENERAL INFORMATION FOR A LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONAL EXAM & LICENSE

## GENERAL LICENSE INFORMATION:

**TWO licenses are required to do landscaping work in Oregon: the individual landscape construction professional license and the landscape contracting business license. This contains information regarding the individual landscape construction professional license, which is normally the first step in licensing.**

### **What is a licensed landscape construction professional?**

A landscape construction professional is an individual who has passed the competency examination and is licensed to provide services as an employee or owner of a licensed landscape contracting business. These services include, but are not limited to, plan or install lawns, shrubs, vines, trees or nursery stock including the preparation of the property on which the plantings are to be installed; install, maintain or repair ornamental water features, drainage systems, install or repair irrigation systems; plan, install, maintain, or repair fences, decks, arbors, driveways, walkways, patios, landscape edging and retaining walls; and install and repair artificial turf less than 30,000 sq ft. A landscape construction professional also supervises unlicensed employees of licensed landscape contracting businesses.

### **Do I need a license to do yard/landscape maintenance?**

No, landscape maintenance is not regulated by the State of Oregon. However, you should check with your city or county for local requirements. Landscape maintenance is work performed on an existing landscape and the general upkeep of an already installed project. Examples of this are: mowing, pruning, edging, applying mulching materials, and trimming. Irrigation repair is NOT landscape maintenance and DOES require a license. Please visit our website at [www.oregon.gov/lcb](http://www.oregon.gov/lcb) for more information regarding landscape maintenance businesses.

### **How do I know if I'm doing landscape maintenance or landscape contracting?**

Maintenance involves the care of plants and the general upkeep of an already installed project. Landscape contracting is the preparation for and/or installation of a project or any part of it.

### **Why is an individual license required?**

Landscape construction work in Oregon does not require permits to be obtained and subsequent inspections to be performed (except for backflow installations and construction work that has specific code requirements). The landscape construction professional license promotes consumer confidence that this individual has the knowledge and experience in performing and supervising landscape construction work on the consumer's landscape construction project.

### **What types of licenses are there?**

There are five types or phases of landscape construction professional licenses:

- All Phase - all phases of landscaping including irrigation and backflow.
- Standard - does not include irrigation or backflow.
- Irrigation & Backflow only - irrigation and backflow only.
- Planting only . planting and preparing of the property, including grading and drainage.
- Probationary All Phase . all phases of landscaping including irrigation and backflow with restrictions

### **What if I am licensed to do landscape work in another state?**

Oregon does not have reciprocity agreements with other states. However, you should submit a copy of your out-of-state license with your application. Your out-of-state license may qualify you to sit for the exam.

### **How much is the application fee?**

The individual application fee is \$100. If you are applying for a Probationary license the fee is \$75. The application fee is non-refundable and must be submitted with the application.

### **How long before I'll know if I'm eligible to sit for the exam?**

All applications are reviewed within 5 working days. The length of time before you are notified of eligibility depends on the complexity of your application and how long it takes to verify all of your documentation. Once your application is approved you will receive notification by mail.

### **Once I pass the exam, can I start working?**

No. Passing the exam allows you to become a licensed landscape construction professional. However, to begin work, you must be employed by or own a licensed landscape contracting business (see business license application packet).

### **What do I do after I pass all the sections of the exam that are required for the license?**

You will need to pay the initial license fee, which is \$100. This is an annual license fee.

**What is the "Backflow" portion of the license?** Your backflow+license will allow tapping into potable water supply lines and installing backflow prevention assemblies for irrigation and water features only.

### **How about low-voltage electrical installations?**

Employees of licensed landscape contracting businesses are authorized to install low-voltage landscape irrigation control wiring and outdoor landscape lighting without an electrical license except planting only licensees. The licensed landscape contracting business must provide the employee with a Low voltage I.D. Card. Low-voltage is defined as Class 2 or Class 3 systems that do not exceed 30 volts and 750 volt . amperes. The ID card can be found on the LCB website.

### **What other licenses do I need?**

Besides a landscape construction professional license, you also need a landscape contracting business license and possibly a local business license if you plan to start your own business.

## **TRADITIONAL WRITTEN EXAM INFORMATION:**

### **What should I study for the exam?**

A list of study/resource material will be sent to you as well as an order form to purchase any recommended resource materials that are for sale. This list can be found on our website ([www.oregon.gov/lcb](http://www.oregon.gov/lcb)) and in the Candidate Information Bulletin which is also available on our website.

### **What does the exam consist of?**

There are six sections of the exam: Laws, Rules and Business Practice, Plants & Turf, Grading & Drainage, Hardscaping, Irrigation, and Backflow.

### **Required sections to be passed for Landscape Construction Professional license:**

- All Phase** - Laws, Rules and Business Practices, Plants & Turf, Design, Grading & Drainage, Hardscaping, Irrigation and Backflow (6 sections)
- Standard** - Laws, Rules and Business Practices, Plants & Turf, Design, Grading & Drainage, and Hardscaping (4 sections)
- Irrigation Only** . Laws, Rules and Business Practices, Irrigation and Backflow (3 sections)
- Planting Only** . Laws, Rules and Business Practices, Plants & Turf and Design, Grading & Drainage (3 sections)
- Probationary** - Laws, Rules and Business Practices, Plants & Turf, Design, Grading & Drainage, Hardscaping, Irrigation and Backflow (6 sections)

### **Can I get a sample exam or previous exam to study?**

No. There are sample questions included in the Candidate Information Bulletin, as well as a lot of information regarding the exam, the subjects of each section and PSI's exam procedures.

### **How often is the exam given?**

The exam is given on an individual basis by appointment with PSI.

### **Where is the exam given?**

The exam is currently administered through PSI. PSI has 7 exam locations in Oregon (Baker City, Bend, Eugene, Independence, Medford, Portland and Wilsonville). A detailed list including addresses is provided in the Candidate Information Bulletin published by PSI.

### **How many questions are on the exam?**

The number of questions varies from 50 to 100 per section. The All Phase exam (all six sections) has a total of approximately 400 questions. There is detailed information regarding each section of the exam in the Candidate Information Bulletin.

### **If I do not pass, is the fee refunded?**

No.

### **If I fail, can I take the exam again?**

You may take the exam as many times as needed.

### **Is there a fee to retake the exam?**

Yes. The exam is administered by PSI and the retake fees are published in the PSI Candidate Information Bulletin.

## **PRACTICAL SKILLS TESTING INFORMATION:**

### **What is Practical Skills Testing?**

The Landscape Contractors Board (LCB) now offers a Practical Skills Test in lieu of the traditional written test. This is a hands-on test which provides an alternative way to become licensed.

### **What license phases are available?**

At this time, only limited phase licenses may be obtained through this option: Planting and Irrigation plus Backflow licenses. The backflow section remains a written section and must be taken through the current written exam provider (PSI).

### **What's required for licensure?**

In addition to hands-on testing, a portion of the test process will include a smaller written exam for each license phase. Attending a four (4) hour business course (offered in English or Spanish) is also required.

### **When and Where is the Test Held?**

The Practical Skills Test will be held annually, starting July 22, 2016 at Clackamas Community College. The Oregon Landscape Contractors Association (OLCA) has offered leverage of the current Landscape Industry Certified Technician Exterior (LICT-E), formerly and more commonly known as the CLT, to serve as a portion of the testing process.

### **How Do I Register?**

A registration form is available on our website at [www.oregon.gov/lcb](http://www.oregon.gov/lcb) and must be completed and received in the LCB office. The deadline to register is June 15, 2017.

### **What's included in the "hands-on" testing portion?**

The required sections of the LICT-E (hands-on) test are:

Planting License: Plant ID, Tree Planting and Staking, Sod Installation, Plant Layout, Grading & Drainage, and Instruments. The two written sections: Plants & Turf and Design, Grading & Drainage must also be passed.

Irrigation License: Lateral Repair & Head Adjustment, Lateral Installation, Mainline Installation, Valve Repair, and Valve Wiring. There is one written section on Irrigation which must be passed. In addition, you must also pass the Backflow section of the traditional written exam.

Due to time constraints, you may test for only one license phase each time . Planting or Irrigation.

### **How and when can I take the smaller written sections?**

These written sections are smaller than the traditional written exams. These smaller written exams will be provided by the LCB on the day of the Practical Skills Test in July or can be taken at anytime throughout the year at various site locations through PSI (by making an appointment).

### **Where can I find study materials?**

Study materials for the Practical Skills Test hands-on portion are available through OLCA at: [www.oregonlandscape.com](http://www.oregonlandscape.com).

Study materials for the Practical Skills Written sections are available through the LCB at [www.oregon.gov/lcb](http://www.oregon.gov/lcb).

### **What if I've already passed part of the LICT-E?**

If an applicant has passed sections of the LICT-E exam within the last 2 years, those scores are valid and, if transferred to the LCB, may qualify. The applicant will still be required to pass the Practical Skills Written test questions (see Written Sections below). Contact OLCA to have any passing scores for the required sections sent to the LCB office.

### **What if I've already passed part of the traditional written exam?**

An applicant may combine passed sections of the traditional written exam and the Practical Skills Test. For example, if you obtain your Planting license through the Practical Skills Test, you may take the full written Hardscape test to obtain a Standard License.

### **Business Course – what are my options?**

An applicant that passes at least one phase of the Practical Skills hands-on+portion (e.g.; Planting -or- Irrigation) for a limited license may choose to take an approved business course in lieu of the traditional full written Laws, Rules & Business Practices test. Attendance of this business course is valid for two years and a review may be provided, but results will not be considered for licensure. To attend the four (4) hour business class, please contact Clackamas Community College: <https://www.clackamas.edu/>

### **What is the cost?**

Pricing depends on which license phase you wish to obtain. There is a \$120 administrative fee for OLCA and a \$100 registration fee for the LCB, in addition, there is \$60 per section fee for the hands-on+portion. For an applicant taking all sections for a Planting license (including the written sections) the cost is \$665. For an applicant taking all sections for an Irrigation license (including the written section) the cost is \$595. An applicant may change the type of exam they wish to take. However, exam fees will not be refunded.

### **What if English is my second language?**

The Practical Skills Test will be available in Spanish for both the hands-on+portion and written portions. For the written portion only, if English is your second language and you wish to take the test in English, additional time may be allowed. You will need to indicate on the registration form which option you desire.

### **How does scoring work?**

If you passed a section of the written exam you can still take the Practical Skills Test for the other sections and combine passing of specific sections. The passing score requirement for the hands-on+portion is 70%. The passing score requirement for the written portions is 75%. Passing scores are valid for two (2) years.

### **What if I fail a section?**

If you fail a section, you will need to retake that section the next time it's available. There are no appeal rights.

## HOW CAN I QUALIFY TO TAKE THE EXAM

To qualify for the exam you must meet at least one of the following requirements. If you are qualifying by your experience with a landscape contracting business or in a landscape related field (rather than a degree or education) the experience must be within 10 years prior to the date of the application.

1. **Employed by a licensed landscape contracting business for a total of 2 years.**
  - To document your employment with a licensed landscape contracting business complete the employment verification form. This form must be submitted with your application.
2. **Submit documentation to verify two years of related landscaping experience (nursery work, landscape maintenance work, etc).**
  - To document experience in landscape related work, submit a completed landscape maintenance verification form documenting 5 customers/projects per year for a 2 year period or the employment verification form if you were an employee of a company performing landscape related work.
3. **Have obtained Associates, Bachelors or Masters Degree in horticulture or related field which includes cooperative work experience (if no cooperative work experience, documentation showing 6 months of related landscape experience may substitute).**
  - To verify a degree in horticulture or a related field, submit a copy of your transcripts.
4. **Hold a certificate in horticulture or other related field from an accredited school or college that requires a minimum of 72 credit hours, which includes cooperative work experience in landscaping (if no cooperative work experience, documentation showing 6 months of related landscape experience may substitute).**
  - To verify this certificate, submit a copy of certificate and a copy of transcripts with your application.
5. **Hold a current certification with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) as a Certified Arborist.**
  - To verify you hold this certification, submit a copy of your certificate with your application.
6. **Successfully completed the Landscape Industry Certification program administered by OLCA or another entity licensed to the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP).**
  - To verify you have completed this program, submit a copy of your signed certificate with your application.

7. **Hold a current membership as a Certified Professional Member of Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD).**
  - To verify you hold this certification, submit a copy of your certificate with your application.
8. **Hold a current Oregon Backflow Assembly Tester Certification or complete a Backflow Assembly Tester 5 day course approved by the Oregon Drinking Water Program.**
  - To verify, submit a copy of certification or course completion with your application.
9. **Other landscaping related certified membership on an individual basis to be determined by the board.**
  - If you have other experience that you feel would qualify you to take the exam, submit documentation and a letter of explanation. You will be contacted if any further documentation is needed.

### **What if I don't meet any of the qualifications to sit for the exam?**

You may apply for a probationary license. A probationary license means anyone is allowed to take the Landscape Construction Professional exam without meeting the qualifications. The individual must pass all sections of the exam within one year of the first sitting of the exam.

Once the exams are passed and a Probationary All Phase license is issued, the individual may:

- Start his/her own landscape contracting business where the business will be required to carry a \$15,000 bond and will only be allowed to perform landscape projects that do not exceed \$15,000.
- Work for an employee of a licensed landscape contracting business under the direct supervision of a non-probationary licensed construction professional.
- Work for 24 months as an employee of a licensed landscape contracting business and be the phase basis of this business. The business must carry a \$15,000 bond and will only be allowed to perform landscape projects that do not exceed \$15,000.

After a period of 24 months meeting one of these requirements, the licensee may request the probationary status be removed.

If you have further questions, please contact us.

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