



Tree Care Industry Association
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Tim Harris New Chair of TCIA

Tim Harris, president of Buckley Tree Service in New Berlin, Wisconsin, was installed as chairman of the board of directors of the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) at its recent Winter Management Conference on Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. He was first elected to TCIA's board in February 2000, when TCIA was known as the National Arborist Association (NAA).

Buckley Tree Service was founded in 1963, and Harris has been the president and owner since 1994. The first accredited tree care company in Wisconsin, Buckley has been a TCIA member since 1977. Harris is also a member of the International Society of Arboriculture, Wisconsin Arborist Association and Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association. In 2004, Harris received the Wisconsin Arborist Association Distinguished Service Award, which is presented to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions of their time and talent to the WAA.

Harris attended Northern Michigan University and University of New Mexico, where he studied secondary education. "I wanted to be a high school teacher and coach," he noted. Instead, a summer job with Buckley turned into a career.

Harris started off as a hose dragger for Buckley's spray man and worked his way up from there. His transition from employee to owner was smoothed by a planned program. "I ran the company for five years before the buyout," he said. "I was the general manager and in charge of sales. The owner gave me a free hand to run the place before I was the owner."

"When I started with Buckley in 1982, I was the third employee," he said. "When I bought the business 12 years later we had eight or nine employees. Today we have 23. Our market is pretty spread out. We opened a second office because we were spending too much time, which means money, driving out to job sites. It is not uncommon for us to travel 40 miles to a site."

Buckley's current mix of business is roughly 60 percent traditional tree work and 40 percent plant health care.

His focus in his year as chairman will be on spreading the word about the value of accreditation – to the industry and consumers. TCIA has committed to the Transformation of the Industry, a five outcome plan to enhance the professionalism, safety, and consumer awareness of the tree care industry.

"I truly believe the tree care industry and this association are at a crossroads," Harris stated in his inaugural speech. "TCIA and its members have an opportunity to take commercial arboriculture to the next level. Our success in pushing our industry forward will depend entirely on how quickly and fully we embrace TCIA's accreditation program," he said. "Going through the accreditation process is the best thing I have ever done for my business. The experience helped everyone in my company focus on our strengths and weaknesses and gave us a clear direction on where we want to take the business. It may take a while for consumers to recognize its value, but we need to give the consumer a clear choice to identify professional tree care companies."

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