

SECTION 8: WORKFORCE TO ACCOMPLISH THE TRANSFORMATION

RECOMMENDATION #2: C-27 Examination Questions Covering Water Use Efficiency and Sustainable Practices

Background

In 2005, the AB 2717 Landscape Task Force recommended “a common foundation for the education, training, and certification of landscape professionals across the disciplines involved in designing, installing, maintaining, and managing water-efficient landscapes.” The California Urban Water Conservation Council (CUWCC) arrived at a similar conclusion by identifying the need for more workforce education in the landscape industry in their draft 2015 report on *Sustainable Landscaping: Market Transformation Framework*. During its investigative process and discussions with horticultural industry professionals and public officials, the ITP found the need for a more comprehensive education program for landscape professionals and the need to update current curriculum trade exams to be consistent with new landscape practices and regulations.

In the state of California there are three license classifications able to provide landscape installations. These are General Contracting A and B categories and specialty license C-27 (specifically for landscape contractors). The Contractors trade exam for individuals applying for a license which allows for landscaping currently consists of about 100 questions, similar to the exams for the other license classifications. These trade exams must cover a very broad spectrum of industry knowledge depending upon the type of license being applied. Landscaping practices are changing or will soon change as a result of the drought and recent actions taken by DWR to update the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance as well as the state agencies that oversee building standards. Therefore, it follows that the trade exam should be updated to be consistent with changing landscape practices and updates to building codes.

Purpose Statement

The ITP recommends that CSLB be directed to include questions with more sustainable landscape content and to add a resource on sustainable landscape construction to its list of recommended study materials for the exam.

The Independent Technical Panel Recommends That:

The California State Legislature shall direct the Department of Consumers Affairs to require The California State Licensing Board (CSLB) to formally work with the California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA) and Department of Water Resources (DWR) when revising sections of the existing exams for General contracting classes A and B specific to landscaping and the specialty C-27 license. This includes CSLB, DWR and CLCA consensus on questions in the trade portion that are specific to water use efficiency and sustainable practices to help ensure that the state’s water efficiency needs called for

the California Water Action Plan are sufficiently supported. As such, the CSLB will continue to include MWEL0 and add other collateral material specific to sustainability into the reference study material.