

Qualifications for Vegetation Management work on a power transmission system

October 2025

This two-pager is an example of common qualifications and roles required for Vegetation Management work on a power transmission system. It is a high-level overview. Wataynikaneyap Power should be contacted directly to prepare for different business opportunities and understand qualifying procedures for each contract. Similarly, pathways towards certifications should be confirmed by directly contacting the relevant organization.

Vegetation Management contractors need to have the knowledge, training and experience to perform the work safely; be familiar with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and with the provisions of the Regulations that apply to the work; and have knowledge of all potential or actual danger to health or safety in the work. In most cases, this is by meeting the standards set by the industry, as well as the Guiding Principles and ayakwamizin directive, to ensure the safety of all parties.

Contractors must complete a pre-qualification form (PQF), which will include proof that they have established and are able to provide their company's:

- HSE program or equivalent to Wataynikaneyap's
- Procedures for type of work required
- Emergency response/rescue plan
- Training matrix with employee name and job title
- Equipment list
- Spill response procedure
- Safety Data Sheet (SDS) of substances

Contractors must also meet insurance requirements:

- Certificate of Insurance (COI) \$5 million liability
- Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage / IHSa member
- Company Workplace Injury Summary Report/ New Experimental Experience Rating (NEER) statement over last 3 years (Fatality, Lost Time Injuries)
- CAD-7 Experiencing Rating / Merit Adjusted Premium (MAP)

Some roles will also require trades qualifications/ specialty licenses or certificates, such as:



Example: Utility Arborist 444B

In Ontario, the 444B is a specialized certification for a Utility Arborist, and it is different from the general 444A Arborist certification. 444B is required for arborists who work near highly hazardous energized electrical equipment, like power lines. This certification includes:

- 5,340 hours (approximately three years) of supervised on-the-job training to gain practical experience in tasks like pruning, vegetation management, and using specialized equipment.
- 660 hours (12 weeks) of in-class technical training to learn the theoretical knowledge and safety protocols.
- Upon completion of an apprenticeship program, Skilled Trades Ontario will issue a Certificate of Apprenticeship.
- Upon passing a certifying exam, Skilled Trades Ontario will issue a Certificate of Qualification. This certificate does not have to be renewed.

What does the workforce need to safely complete Vegetation Management programs?

Requirement (within an acceptable expiry date)	General Labourer	Skilled Labourer	Utility Arborist	
		↓ Utility Arborist Apprentice ↓	↓	
Chipper Training	✓	✓	✓	✓
Electrical Safety Awareness High Voltage (IHSA certificate or similar)	✓	✓	✓	✓
First Aid certificate from valid provider	✓	✓	✓	✓
Worker and Supervisor H&S Awareness (MOL certificate or in-house certificate) • MOL 4 Steps - Workers - certification • MOL 5 Steps - Supervisors - certification	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spill Response	✓	✓	✓	✓
Traffic Protection (IHSA certificate)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training	✓	✓	✓	✓
Industrial Operations Forest Fire Fighting: SP-105/106 certification	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chainsaw and/or Brushsaw certification		✓	✓	✓
Electrical Utilities Safety Rules (IHSA certificate)			✓	✓
Elevated Work Platforms (with rescue training)			✓	✓
Mechanized Equipment Operator training (operator with utility experience working on a Right of Way)			✓	✓
Safety and Awareness for Line Clearing (IHSA certificate)			✓	✓
Utility Work Protection Code Overview (IHSA certificate)			✓	✓
Working at Heights training (MOL certificate)			✓	✓

Provincial Regulations, Industry Standards, and Best Management Practices

- Ontario Health & Safety Act (OHSA)
- Infrastructure of Health & Safety Association (IHSA)
 - Electrical Safety Rule Book
- Canada Standards Association (CSA)
- Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)
- NERC
- Forest Fire Protection Act (FFPA)
- Good Utility Practice, Standards and Risk Mitigation
- Third Party Audit and Assessments

Ayakwamizin ᐱᐃᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

Through ceremony, Wataynikaneyap Power was given the word “ayakwamizin” – to proceed with caution. These are the laws of our People. This direction, along with the Guiding Principles, is followed throughout the life of the Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system.

Wataynikaneyap Power is dedicated to the safety of our employees, contractors, and the public.

Acronyms

H&S – Health and Safety

HSE – Health, Safety, and Environmental

IHSA – Infrastructure Health & Safety Association

MOL – Ministry of Labour



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