Duntemann Urban Forestry, LLC
The Use and Abuse of Logical Fallacies in Tree-Related Conflicts
### Lecture Description

Lecture Description: Logical fallacies are statements of fact that contain errors in reasoning. They often lack necessary context, rendering the opinion suspect, when provided as an opinion. Logical fallacies, often times, are used to mischaracterize an organization's or tree care company's program and policies. They can arise in tree-related conflicts, such as between neighbors, residents or developers and a town, and in litigation.

A logical fallacy can become a fact for the purposes of argumentation when unchallenged. The ability to identify and challenge logical fallacies is critical to one's practice. Several dozen types of logical fallacies exist, and each type is identified by the inherent weakness in the argument. This 1.5-hour lecture will describe twelve common logical fallacies that are employed in tree-related conflicts. Examples include: The Analogical Fallacy, Affirming the Consequent, Loaded Words, The Complex Question, Bifurcation, and Unobtainable Perfection.

One common logical fallacy is "The Complex Question". This form of logical fallacy takes several issues and wraps them into one statement. For example, consider how you might respond to the following question when a yes or no answer is required:

"Don't you agree that the tree had a defect, and the town should have removed it?"

How one responds to this question can inadvertently mischaracterize a town's policy or how risk is managed. This peril can be easily avoided, and this lecture offers guidance on identifying, analyzing, and countering logical fallacies when they are presented. Participants will gain knowledge and skills they can practice strengthening their ability to respond to logical fallacies when they occur.
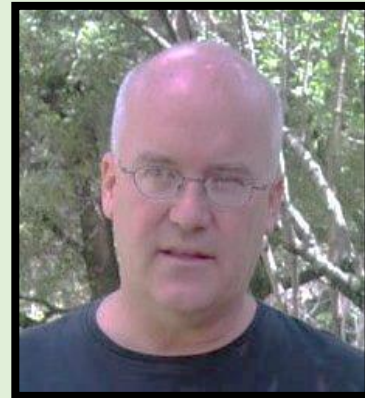
Instructor Biography

Mark Duntemann is the owner of Duntemann Urban Forestry, LLC. He is an internationally recognized expert in tree risk management policy development. Mark is an ISA Board-Certified Master Arborist, is an ISA-tree risk assessment qualification (TRAQ) instructor and maintains the tree assessment certification from the Arboriculture Association (UK).

Mark received a post-graduate certificate in risk assessment methods from Harvard's Chan School of Public Administration and completed the Public Risk Management Association's (PRIMA) course on enterprise risk management. He is currently developing a book on tree risk management and researching tools for identifying tree risk thresholds for tree care companies, arborists, and municipalities.

Mark served as an expert witness in numerous tree-related injury and fatality cases. This experience informs his lectures. His work is international in scope.