Sustainable Landscape Certification (SLC)
Fact Sheet

**The following are some commonly asked questions concerning the
Sustainable Landscapes Certification:**

What is the Sustainable Landscape Certification?
The Sustainable Landscape Certification is an additional professional certification in one of the fastest growing areas of horticulture. An SLC has the specialized knowledge about how plants can be used most effectively to provide ecosystem services that improve water quality, air quality, and enhance human health and performance. An SLC must maintain their certification through a program of continuing education credits to ensure his/her ongoing knowledge and expertise as a professional in the sustainable landscape discipline.

Why should I become an SLC?
Knowledge of the design, installation and maintenances of sustainable landscape systems is being driven by consumer demand and government regulations such as Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permits, the Chesapeake Bay cleanup and PA Department of Environmental Protection storm water management best practices and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources riparian buffer program. Accordingly, these state and municipal governing agencies are aware of the SLC certification, and this credential can positively impact the review of grant applications and awards.

Who is eligible for this certification?
Professionals who design, install, and maintain sustainable landscapes in the residential, commercial, or municipal environments.

What do my registration fees cover?
The application fee covers the first exam, one retest, and recognition when certification is achieved.

PLNA Member (owner/employee of PLNA member firm)	$ 75.00
Non-member	$125.00

Additional retests within the two-year application period are subject to a retest fee.

PLNA Member (owner/employee of PLNA member firm)	$ 25.00
Non-member	$ 35.00

What is the test procedure?
The exam consists of 125 questions to be completed in one hour. The format of the exam consists of a combination of multiple choice, true or false, and matching questions. The sections consist of:

- Natural Cycles and the Human Impacts on the Environment
- Native Plants
- Use of Plants in the Sustainable Landscape
- Key Benefits of Sustainable Landscapes
- Stormwater Best Management Practices for Sustainable Landscapes
- The Economics of Sustainable Landscapes
- Applicable Environmental Regulations
- Design Goals for Sustainable Landscapes including Understanding the Site, Design and Construction, Monitoring and Maintenance

How do I schedule an exam?
Prior to the COVID pandemic, SLC exams could be scheduled at Penn State Cooperative Extension offices throughout Pennsylvania. Until further notice, exams are currently being conducted online via Zoom. Contact Tiffany Carpenter, Certification Coordinator, at 717.238.1673 or email tcarpenter@wannerassoc.com to schedule an exam date. For large groups, arrangements may sometimes be made for on-site testing at your company. Contact Cicely Elliott, Executive Director, at PLNA@PLNA.com for more information on in-house proctoring.

What does it take to pass the exam?
To pass the examination, candidates must attain a score of at least 80%. If a passing score is attained the candidate will be earn the designation of SLC (Sustainable Landscapes Certified). Scores will be emailed within one week after the exam materials are received. Scores will NOT be given over the phone.

If the candidate does not attain the minimum passing score, the candidate must retake the exam. The first time a candidate retests there is no charge. Beyond that a candidate may retake the exam for a charge of $25.00 for PLNA members or $35.00 for non-members within the remainder of their two-year application period.

What's the best way to prepare for the Sustainable Landscapes Certification Exam?
The Sustainable Landscapes Study Manual, published by PLNA and purchasable in the PLNA e-Store, is designed to serve as a comprehensive study guide for those preparing for the certification exam, as well as a reference source for the industry. Each area of the exam is covered by the guide with additional works referenced for voluntary review. The Sustainable Landscape Study Manual, available digitally as a downloadable PDF, is $35.00 for PLNA members and $60.00 for non-members.

What are the requirements to maintain the SLC designation?
Individuals holding the SLC certification must recertify every two years AND report 12 CEUS within the recertification period AND pay the required recertification fee. CEUS may be earned in various Education categories. Reminders for CEU reporting will be sent via email and regular mail. Approved Education categories can be found on www.PLNA.com. When possible, courses will be identified as eligible for the SLC designation required CEUs.

If I obtain the SLC designation and I have earned the PCH designation how does this affect my recertification requirements?
Your PCH certification renewal period or number of CEUs required will not change. You will not have to report the additional 12 CEUs; however, you will be required to earn at least 12 of the 24 PCH CEUs under your Sustainable Landscapes Certification. Please refer to each certification's guidelines when reporting CEUs. When possible, courses posted on the PLNA Calendar will be identified as eligible for SLC designation CEUs.

Questions? Contact Tiffany Carpenter, Certification Coordinator, at 717.283.1673 or tcarpenter@wannerassoc.com OR visit www.PLNA.com for more information

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