

# BUFFERS

*Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional  
Riparian Buffer Training Certificate*



## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CONTRACTOR

### GENERAL EXPERIENCE AND CREDENTIALS

How long have you been in the landscaping design, consulting, or installation business?

- Ask about acknowledgments, awards, or accolades earned for their work.

Are you licensed within your State?

- Ask for a copy of their license and contact the issuing authority to ensure it is current and in good standing.

What types of insurance do you carry?

- General liability insurance – ask for a copy of the contractor's general liability insurance certificate.
- Workers' compensation insurance – ask for a copy of the current worker's compensation certificate.

What kind of written warranty or guarantee do you offer?

How do you typically communicate with your clients about projects and keep them informed along the way?

### BUFFERS EXPERIENCE

How many years of experience do you have in designing, consulting, or installing actual buffers?

- How many buffers have you designed or consulted on versus installed?
- Does your work include private, public, or community buffers?

What type of specific buffer services do you offer?

- Site assessment and analysis including evaluation of erosion potential and duration of erosion protection?
- Design plan? Funding sources? Permitting process? Plant selection?
- Maintenance advice?

Can you provide a list of references for completed buffer projects?

- Include contact names and actual addresses so you can go and physically view the work.
- Ensure you ask references the following:
  - » Was work completed on time?
  - » Was work of sufficient quality within the contracted price?
  - » Were you satisfied with the way the project was managed and communications along the way?

#### BUFFER PROJECT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

What is the typical range of costs for a buffers project??

- Are you able to offer a fixed cost vs. estimated?
- What's your typical payment schedule?

What is the expected timeline for this type of project?

Who will be doing the work on my property?

- Who will the Team be comprised of? Get names and their experience levels.
- Will you be hiring sub-contractors for this work? How do you choose your sub-contractors?

How long does it take for vegetation to propagate or mature into a working buffer?

How long will erosion protection last?

How will your Team access my site – by land or by water?

What kind of post-installation maintenance work will I be required to do?

#### OTHER KEY TIPS:

Approach multiple contractors for quotes. You want to have a good understanding of the market to ensure that you are getting a reasonable quote.

Make sure all project material selections are spelled out and signed in a written contract. Ensure your contract includes plans, costs, and timelines. If you don't understand the contract, have a private attorney review it.

Pay no more than 1/3 down as a deposit. Never pay cash.

*\*This document was adapted from The Living Shoreline Implementation Plan by The Chesapeake Bay Program.*