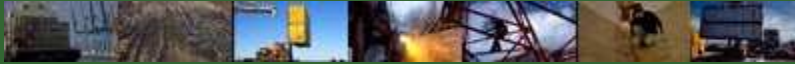




Safety Meeting Outline



SMO 08-0204

CHAIN SAW SAFETY AWARENESS

By SeaBright Insurance Loss Control

Working with a chain saw requires strong safety habits and concentration. In the blink of an eye, this useful tool can cause serious injury to you or others nearby.

Personal Protective Equipment: these basics should be worn by all users of chain saws and are required (OSHA 1910.266) for all employed chain saw operators.

1. Helmet system: consisting of head, face, and hearing protection. A high visibility color is preferred.
2. Cut Resistant Chaps or Pants: designed to protect the left side of the legs, the most common place of injury.
3. Cut & Slip Resistant Footwear: boots must have steel toes and need to be appropriate for the environment.
4. Hand Protection: cotton or leather gloves protect hands from minor cuts, abrasions and the weather. They also help prevent problems such as Raynaud's Disease or White Finger Disease. Some gloves are thin enough to fit inside "White Ox" type gloves and work to absorb vibration. Using a saw that is designed to isolate the engine from the handle is a good first step in limiting vibration. Finally, avoid gripping the saw too tightly, which reduces blood circulation to the fingers. Several types of cut resistant gloves are now made and are worth considering.

Equipment Maintenance: Know your saw, read the manufacturer's manual, and understand its safe operation. Sharpen, lubricate and adjust the chain as often as required to maintain good cutting ability. Keep additional chains readily available since they are easily dulled. If force on the bar is required to cut, it means the chain is dull and needs to be sharpened. Inspect the sprockets and replace them when they become worn. A badly worn sprocket makes it nearly impossible to adjust the chain and increases the chances the chain will be thrown. Make sure bars are wearing evenly—dress them up with a file every day and flip them to increase bar life. Make sure chain brakes are installed and in good working order. Always shut off the saw before setting it on the ground for maintenance or at the end of a cut.

Starting the saw: Always use two hands to start a chainsaw, one to hold the saw and the other to pull the starter cord. Some saws may be held down with your foot while starting. Check your owner's manual. Chain saws should never be started while being held mid-air with one hand. Always start it on the ground or a stable work surface. Always use two hands to control the chain saw, and do not force the saw through a cut. A properly sharpened saw will almost cut by itself.

Felling the Tree: There are several things to consider when felling a tree. How large is the tree, will it strike any objects, other trees, or power lines when it falls? Which way does it lean and how is it weighted? Which way is the wind blowing? Determine the direction of the fall and your escape route before you begin cutting. Your escape route should be approximately 45 degrees from the direction of the fall. Select a location to place the saw when leaving, do not run with the saw in hand.

Start with a 45 degree notch on the side that the tree will fall towards. Cut the bottom of notch first about 1/3 of the way through the diameter. Make the second cut from the top at 45 degrees to meet the depth of first cut. The third cut should be made from the opposite side of the tree, about 2 inches higher than the bottom of the notch. Do not cut all the way through but leave a hinge to keep the tree from kicking back as it falls. When the tree starts to fall, shut off the saw, place it down safely, and leave on your escape route. If the tree will not fall after the third cut you may use two plastic wedges to influence the direction of fall.

Felling trees can be very dangerous and should only be done when conditions are right. If the tree fall cannot be done in a safe direction and manner, get professional help before cutting.

Limbing the Tree: Make sure the fallen tree is stable and will not move. Make sure limbs to be removed will not bind against the saw or spring back after a cut is made. Cut on the opposite side of trunk whenever possible, keeping the trunk between you and the saw. Never stand on the downhill side when removing limbs, as the trunk may roll as limbs are removed. If a tree should start to roll, do not attempt to stop it. One person cannot stop trees from rolling. Larger limbs may require more than one cut and may require wedges as did the trunk cut. As the trunk and large limbs are cut into smaller lengths, block the trunk so it will not roll. Cut down from the top about 1/3 of the diameter, and then roll over to complete the cut.

Safe Practices:

Avoid making cuts between your legs, always cut with the saw to the outside of your legs.

Don't stand on a log and cut between your feet.

Stand to one side of a log, never straddle it.

Keep in mind where the chain will go if it breaks; never place yourself or others in line with the chain.

Keep the chain out of dirt, ice or rocks. Debris will fly, teeth will be dulled and chain life will be shortened.

Transport chainsaws in a level position with gas caps on.

Do not carry saws in passenger compartments of vehicles.

When not in use, the saw should be kept in a case or stored with a bar guard in place.

Keep the saw and blade in proper working order and have serviced as the owner's manual recommends.

Kick Back: Kickback is when the teeth on the chain catch on something as they rotate around the tip of the blade; causing the blade to violently kick towards the user. This can happen when the nose of the blade strikes another object or when the blade tip catches the bottom or side of a saw cut during reinsertion. The best defense is a tip guard, but this limits what can be done with the saw. Keeping a firm hold and using a saw with a chain break or kickback guard will provide some control. Other techniques to avoid kickback include:

Cutting with the base of blade, not sawing with the tip.

Avoid blade pinching situations.

Use high chain speed when reinserting the blade in a cut or removing it from a cut.

Keep the teeth sharp; a dull blade is more prone to cause kickback.

Always cut below shoulder height, otherwise the saw is difficult to control and is too close to your face.

At home or at work, make chain saw safety a habit!

SAFETY MEETING AGENDA

DEPARTMENT/JOB SITE: _____ MEETING DATE: _____

1. **Open Meeting & Present safety topic:** _____
2. Read minutes from previous meeting.
3. **Persons present:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. **Old Business** – Status of previous recommendations. Discuss pending old business if any.

5. **Accidents** – Discuss accidents and near misses that have occurred since the last meeting. Brief summary of accidents to date by number and type. Note any trends. Discuss corrective action taken, or needed. Concentrate on accident causes to make everyone more aware.

6. **Inspection Reports** – Report on findings and recommendations of any inspection reports made since last meeting.

7. **New Business** – Solicit employee suggestions. Discuss new procedures, changes to company safety policy, etc.

TIME MEETING STARTED: _____ TIME FINISHED: _____

MEETING CHAIRED BY: _____ TITLE: _____