



Weekly Safety Meeting

Chainsaw Safety

Chainsaws are an efficient and productive portable power tool used in many industries. They are also potentially dangerous if not used correctly and carefully. Proper operation and maintenance greatly reduce the risk for injury when using chainsaws.

Any tool powerful enough to slice through wood can do the same to human flesh, so chainsaw injuries are often serious.

Before you operate a chainsaw, make sure you read and understand the operator's manual and make sure you have the right chainsaw for the job.

The instruction manual should describe the saw's capabilities. If you rent a saw, be sure to get a demonstration of how it works, including its safety features. Then make sure your saw is sharp, properly tensioned, and in good condition.

Work Area Safety:

- Ensure the area is marked and that there are no people in the immediate area.
 - Other workers should be twice as far as the height of the trees being felled.
- Identify and clear any obstacles that may interfere with stable footing, cutting, or impede retreat/movement paths.
- Identify electrical lines in and near the work area.
- Identify "hangers" and "widow-makers"—branches that may dislodge and fall into the work area from above.

Before Starting the Chainsaw:

- Check controls, chain tension, and all bolts and handles to ensure they are functioning properly and are adjusted according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure the chainsaw engine is the appropriate size for the project.
- Fuel the saw at least 10 feet away from ignition sources.
- Check the fuel container to ensure it;
 - Is metal or plastic;
 - Does not exceed 5 gallons in capacity; and
 - Is approved by the Underwriters Laboratory, FM Approvals (FM), or the Department of Transportation (DOT).

- Ensure electric chainsaws are tested and certified by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL). Extension cords shall be sized according to the chainsaw manufacturer's instructions.
- Check that all safety devices are working properly.
- Do not operate a chainsaw that is damaged or has disengaged safety devices.
- Look for nails, spikes, or other metal objects prior to cutting.
- Clear away dirt, debris, small tree limbs, and rocks from the chainsaw's path.
- Never work alone.
- Use proper personal protective equipment (PPE).

Operating the Chainsaw:

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for chainsaw operation and maintenance.
- Start the saw on the ground or another firm support with the brake engaged.
- Keep both hands on the handles and maintain secure footing.
- Plan where the object will fall, ensure that the fall area is free of hazards, and avoid felling an object into other objects.
- Plan the cut, watch for objects under tension, and use extreme care to bring objects safely to the ground.
- Be prepared for kickback, avoid cutting in the kickback zone, and use saws that reduce kickback danger (chain brakes, low kickback chains, guide bars, etc.).
- Do not cut directly overhead.
- Shut off or release throttle prior to retreating.
- Shut off or engage the chain brake whenever the saw is carried more than 50 feet or across hazardous terrain.
- Take breaks as needed as fatigue increases the risk for accident and injury.

Remember:

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MAKE SAFETY A REALITY ...DON'T BE A FATALITY!!

