



## Chainsaws

Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) and following safe operating procedures can keep workers who use chainsaws from serious injuries.

### Before Starting a Chainsaw

- Read the operating and instruction manual. Familiarize yourself with the saw's safety features, including guards, brake, throttle trigger lockout and spark arrester.
- Check controls, chain tension, bolts and handles to ensure proper function; adjust according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Make sure chain is sharp and lubrication reservoir is full.
- Start saw on the ground or other firm support. DO NOT drop start a chainsaw.
- Start saw at least 10 feet from the fueling area, with chain's brake on.
- Dispense fuel at least 10 feet away from sources of ignition.
- Don't smoke while refueling saw.
- Never attempt to fuel a running or hot saw.

### More Safety Tips

- Clear dirt, debris, small tree limbs and rocks for the saw's chain path.
- Shut off the saw or turn on chain brake when carrying it over rough terrain.
- Keep your hands on the saw's handles and maintain secure footing.
- Use proper PPE to include closed to boots or shoes, chap made of Kevlar or other cut resistant material, and safety glasses; avoid loose-fitting clothing.
- Be aware of your work zone and your co-workers safety.
- Watch for tree branches under tension, as they may spring out when cut.

## Chain Saw Kickbacks

Kickbacks occur when the upper tip of the guide bar touches an object or when the wood closes in and pinches the chainsaw in the cut. A kickback can result in severe upper body, neck and facial lacerations or death. Safety chains and other features can minimize but not eliminate the dangers of kickbacks.

- Gasoline-powered chainsaws must be equipped with a protective device that minimizes chainsaw kickback.
- To avoid kickbacks, do not saw with the tip.

Source: University Extension, University of Missouri-Columbia

Safety tips developed based on generally accepted safety standards believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

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