

2022 WTEA Conference

Working Safely with Chainsaws

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Presentation Outline:

1. Anatomy of a chainsaw and inspection before operation
 - a. Basic parts: bar, chain, handle, etc...
 - b. Is the chain sharp?
 - c. Rotate bar after sharpening

2. Personal Protective Equipment requirements
 - a. Helmet
 - b. Safety glasses
 - c. Leg Chaps
 - d. Gloves
 - e. Hearing protection
 - f. Work boots (Professionals wear chainsaw boots are great but expensive.)
 - g. First aid kit

3. Safety requirements when handling a chainsaw
 - a. Chainsaw starting procedure
 - i. Ground start
 - ii. Leg lock method
 - iii. Drop start (not for the inexperienced)
 - b. Carrying the saw
 - i. Saw at side bar pointed backwards
 - ii. Saw can be running when walking for short distances. Chain brake on!
 - c. Proper cutting stance and grip
 - i. Stand to the left of the path of kickback
 - ii. Bend knees and make sure you have good footing.
 - iii. Both hands on the saw (left thumb wrapped under front handle)
 - iv. Never reach above shoulder height to cut
 - v. Let the saw work for you. If you must push down, you probably need to sharpen.

4. Hazards associated with chainsaws
 - a. Kickback and kickback zone!
 - b. Maintain a distance of at least 10 ft. when working near another saw operator.
 - c. Chainsaw fatigue
 - d. Stay off ladders.

5. Mechanics of the chainsaw (reactive forces) when cutting
 - a. Push and pull forces with a saw
 - b. Tension and compression

6. Proper method of felling trees
 - a. Assess the tree and felling site
 - i. Identify hazards
 - ii. Tree height and lean
 - iii. Determine the lay
 - iv. Establish an escape route
 - b. Prepare Felling site
 - i. Protect people and property
 - c. Execute Felling Cuts and Retreat
 - i. Cutting the notch
 - ii. Making the backcut
 - iii. Retreating from the work area
 - iv. Reading the stump and cutting the stump
 - d. Felling aids
 - i. Wedges
 - ii. Ropes
 - iii. Woodsman's axe
 - iv. Winch's and rope pullers.
 - e. Limbing and Bucking Felled Trees
 - i. Limbing and bucking hazards
 - ii. Limbing and bucking techniques

7. Demonstration of cutting techniques (outside)