

SAFE & EFFICIENT CHAINSAW OPERATION FOR FIREWOOD CUTTERS

Personal Protective Equipment: PPE is your last line of defense against serious injury. Always wear the suggested PPE and insure that it's maintained in serviceable condition.

- **Hard hat**
- **Leg protection** – cut resistant pants or chaps, should have UL certification
- **Eye protection** – safety glasses or mesh face screen on logging helmet
- **Hearing protection** – ear plugs or muffs on logging helmet
- **Safety boots** – sturdy boots must insure good traction and provide ankle support, steel toe boots with cut resistant are the industry standard for pro loggers
- **Sturdy leather palmed gloves** – protect your hands while working and should be worn when filing the chain
- **First Aid Kit** – Keep an adequate first aid kit (with several large trauma pads) in the immediate work area

Chainsaw safety features: Insure your saw has the necessary safety features and verify that they are in serviceable condition prior to each use.

- Chain brake
- Throttle lock
- Chain catcher
- On / off switch
- Guards and covers in place and without damage
- Dogs or bumper on front of saw – to insure muffler doesn't contact wood
- Antivibration system

Bar and chain maintenance & filing: A properly maintained bar and chain will insure your saw operates at peak performance levels as well as reduces stress on your body and minimize the chance for injury.

- Obtain & use filing guides and depth gauges to insure consistency – follow chain manufactures recommendations
- Sharpen chain at first sign of reduced performance
- Never force a dull chain
- Keep chain properly tensioned
- Insure adequate oiling with high quality bar oil of proper weight for the season
- Consider keeping a spare sharpened chain on hand and replacing rather than stopping to sharpen or pushing on a dull chain – this practice keeps production high and allows adequate time to sharpen the chain under ideal conditions later (in the shop)

Chain brake use: The chain brake should be used whenever

- Starting the saw
- Taking more than a few steps with the saw running
- One hand comes of the saw to do work – move brush, throw a piece of firewood, etc.
(over)

Starting Technique: Proper starting technique minimizes the wear and tear on the saw and your body, while reducing the chance for injury.

- Chain brake on
- Decompression on, if present
- Rear handle held firmly – saw on ground with foot holding rear handle or rear handle gripped between legs
- No people or obstacles in immediate work area

Avoiding Kickback: Kickback is the number one reason for chainsaw cuts; during a kickback event, the tip of the bar can be traveling at 60 mph towards your body.

- Maintain firm grip on handles with both hands, thumb & fingers must completely encircling the handle
- Hold saw close to body – don't reach
- Maintain clear footing – cut only when both feet are firmly positioned, a broad stance increases your stability
- Engage wood only at full throttle
- Maintain proper filing angles and depth gauge heights
- No contact with hazard corner of the bar – top corner

Chainsaw Operation: Good working techniques increase productivity and job quality while reducing the physical effort needed to reach your goals; these factors combine to minimize the chance for personal injury.

- Use only the bar and chain designated for your saw
- Never cut above chest height
- Avoid loose clothing & drawstrings which could become entangled in the saw or chain
- When cutting at ground level, bend your legs to lower your center of gravity – avoid bending at the waist
- No people or pets should be in the immediate work area – separate sawing and other operations (splitting or piling) by at least 20 feet or insure that timing of activities allows only one activity in the safe work zone at any given time.