

## Safety Meeting for April 2014

### Topic: “**Three-Point Rule**” reduces risk of injury

**Introduction:** **I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW** that getting on and off equipment and vehicles accounts for 1 out of every 4 injuries to those operating equipment or driving trucks; some of these injuries can be quite severe. Many knee, ankle and back injuries result from employees not using proper mount/dismount techniques from equipment.

**Background:** To avoid these types of injuries, it is important to understand the “Three Point Rule” for contact. Stated quite simply, always keep three points of contact with the ground or the equipment until you are stable on the equipment or on the ground.

**What must an employee know:** The biggest cause of falls from a vehicle, equipment or ladder is human error - failure to follow the “Three Point Rule.” It requires three of four points of contact to be maintained with the vehicle or ladder at all times – two hands and one foot, or both feet and one hand. This technique allows maximum stability and support and reduces the likelihood of slip and falls.

There are important steps that can be taken to prevent mounting/dismounting injuries with use of the Three Point Rule being most important. **An employer should do the following to ensure the safety of their employees:**

- Conduct safety meeting with employees about using the “Three Point Rule”.
- Evaluate trucks, logging equipment, and ladders for serviceability and safety.
- Provide additional steps, non-slip surfaces and hand holds where necessary.
- Maintain steps, contact surfaces and handholds in useable condition. Inspect frequently.
- Install warning decals or signs in the cab or on the door of trucks and heavy equipment reminding workers to use 3-point contact.

### **Employees should do the following to reduce the risk of injury:**

- Keep truck and equipment steps, ladders and surfaces free of debris.
- Don't use the doorframe or door edge as a handhold.
- Wear footwear with good support and slip resistance.
- Don't try to exit a vehicle with something in your hand.
- Descend slowly to avoid straining a muscle.
- Always mount or climb down while facing the truck or the equipment.
- Get a firm grip on rails or handles.
- Never Jump off from a step or ladder before you reach the bottom or surface

Remember these simple rules and you will have substantially reduced your chance of injury when getting on (or in) as well as off (or out) of a vehicle, equipment, and ladders.



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## Safety Meeting for May 2014

### Topic: AMPUTATIONS

**Introduction:** Recently, we experienced an arm amputation when an employee wearing loose clothing stuck his arm into an area where there was moving parts. His arm contacted a slow moving belt and it pulled his arm off below the elbow.

**Background:** Amputations have been significantly reduced over the last several years. The most recent one listed above occurred in a sawmill operation. Prior to this recent loss of an arm, our last severe amputation occurred in 2009.

**What must an employee know:** An employee must be properly trained on proper machine procedures, including safe operation, shutdown and lockout procedures. Employees must also be trained on proper hand placement, loss clothing and use of guards. The employees must know how to shut down the equipment and then allow all moving parts to completely stop before they remove guards or reach into a point of operation.

The following examples taken from the last eight years show the painful amputation of body parts:

- An employee opened a door on a gang saw and stuck his hand in to clear debris. The blade was still turning and his right hand was cleanly severed three inches above the wrist. The second employee was operating a gang saw too. While the machine was running, a piece of wood jammed at the in-feed. He went to remove it and as it came free it pulled his hand into the rollers and blades. His hand was severely mangled and was amputated at the wrist by doctors. Both failed to use proper lockout procedures.
- Three employees had heavy machine parts fall on their hands and cause the injuries. In all three accidents, the parts were not restrained to prevent movement during maintenance. Springs and cylinders were not blocked or chained to prevent parts from moving or falling.
- Two employees lost fingers due to their hand(s) contacting moving parts. They did not allow for coast down time before remove guards
- Two individuals failed to lockout the machine prior to clearing jams and paid the price. Each lost multiple fingers on one hand.
- Two individuals placed their hands on moving conveyors and were struck by moving objects. They lost fingers because common sense was not used.
- Two individuals actually stuck their hands into machines that were turned off but the blades had not completely stopped. Again, the results were multiple fingers lost.
- One was an employee that placed his hand under a guard and lost his left hand to the wrist on a notcher.

Each injury was preventable. Most employees violated the lockout/tagout procedures and failed to shut down the power prior to placing their hands in a danger zone. Other employees violated basic safety procedures by placing their hands around moving machinery. These employees were not new hires they were experienced workers.

Remind employees to NEVER stick their hands in or around running machinery. Do not stick your hand into rotating parts, allow all moving parts to completely stop. Make sure all parts are stopped and at “Zero Energy” state. The bottom line: these severe injuries resulted in hospitalization, lost workdays, permanent deformities, and lost wages. Each mishap was absolutely preventable. Do not become a statistic!

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## Safety Briefing for June 2014

### **Topic: Heat-Related Illness**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that the body burns calories and produces heat to keep its temperature at 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. In a hot environment or during vigorous physical activity, the body will rid itself of excess heat. Two effective ways it does this are sweating and dilation of blood vessels. When sweat evaporates from the skin, you begin to cool off. When blood vessels dilate, blood is brought to the skin surface to release heat.

**Background:** Heat-related illness takes several forms. Heat rash occurs when sweat ducts get clogged. Heat cramps are painful muscle spasms caused by loss of electrolytes from heavy sweating. If employees develop these conditions, immediately get them out of the heat so they can rest. The next stage of heat-related illness may not be far away. Heat syncope, heat exhaustion and heatstroke develop from prolonged exposure to heat. A victim of heat syncope faints when blood flow to the brain is decreased.

**What must an employee know:** When the body loses too much water and salt, heat exhaustion sets in. Signs include weakness, dizziness, nausea, headache, heavy sweating, clammy skin and slightly elevated body temperature.

### **Hot Tips to Cool Conditions**

As a supervisor or an employee, you should know how to recognize a victim of heat-related illness. Evaluate the symptoms and follow these first aid actions:

**Heat cramps:** Have the employee sip water or a diluted sports drink. Gently stretch the muscle.

**Heat syncope:** Have the employee lie down in a cool area.

**Heat exhaustion:** Lay the employee down in a cool area with his or her legs raised. Remove excessive layers of clothing. Give up to 1 liter of water. Do not give anything to drink if the employee vomits. Cool the worker with cold, wet cloths and a fan.

**Heatstroke:** Call for medical help immediately. While you wait for help to arrive, move the employee to a cool place, remove clothing down to underwear and apply ice packs at the neck, armpits and groin. Cover the employee with wet towels or cloths or spray him or her with cool water, and fan the employee to quickly evaporate the dampness on the skin.

### **Catch It Early**

Awareness is vital to prevent heat-illness. Supervisors and employees need to watch for warning signs. Employees adapt to the heat, but they usually know their limitations and supervisors should never push beyond those limits. Employees can take other preventive measures to combat the heat:

- ❑ Eat light. The more calories you take in, the more body heat you produce.
- ❑ Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day. Drink at least 8 ounces per half hour.
- ❑ Choose the proper type and amount of clothing. Cotton allows skin to breathe and absorbs sweat. Wide-brimmed hats protect from direct sunlight.

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## **Safety Meeting for July 2014**

### **Topic: THE HEAT OF THE SUMMER**

In the past twenty years the forest industry has been blessed by mechanization. The amount of hard and demanding physical labor has been reduced greatly. The introduction of grapple skidders; feller-bunchers; buck saws and delimiters have reduced risk in the industry. Such equipment has also reduced the physical exertion of logging employees. Mechanized forest equipment operators enjoy great creature comforts, heaters and air conditioners. The cabs of the newer logging equipment provide for a comfortable working environment.

On the other side of the coin, timber cutters and saw hands have a very physically demanding job. When the heat of the summer is thrown into this equation, fatigue is the result. Fatigue is a very serious risk that must be dealt with in our industry. Its human nature, a tired or fatigued person will take a short-cut. Short-cuts in the logging woods can prove to be lethal. Fatigue affects the thought process. If we can limit or reduce fatigue levels, we end up with an alert, clear thinking timber cutter. To limit fatigue in the summer heat we must look at personal health and physical exertion. Above all, we must stay hydrated. Gas for the saw, water for me is a saying that should be followed. Strenuous physical exertion may be reduced by working a little smarter, not harder.

### **TIPS FOR HOT WEATHER MANUAL LOGGING**

- Drink plenty of water before, during and after exposure to the heat. Dark yellow colored urine is a sign of not enough water being consumed.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks; they tend to make you thirstier.
- Keep in the shade as much as possible.
- Wear light colored, loose fitting clothing.
- Doctors recommend at least 8 glasses of water on a normal day, twice that should be consumed during high heat periods.
- Work smart, the brain can save a lot of foot steps, less foot steps, less fatigue.
- If at all possible do most of the manual felling during the early morning to avoid the heat of the day.
- If possible, toppers should be stationed in a shaded “safe zone” from the skidders.
- Limit the time your toppers are exposed to the direct sun. Make one trip out of the safe zone to top 3 or 4 drags, rather than running out to top a single drag.
- Timber cutters can cut their whole drag, before going down to top the timber. Limit your trips up and down the slope.

Ultimately, we have to work in the heat to feed our families and pay the bills. If we pay attention to keeping enough water in, and thinking through our work plans, fatigue can be reduced. We must remember that fatigue breaks down the thought process. A sharp and alert mind will conquer risk by employing a proper technique or a correct decision. Beat the summer heat by working smarter, not harder.

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## Safety Meeting for August 2014

### Topic: TRUCK DRIVERS – Distracted Driving

**Introduction:** We can't truly multi-task. Our brains juggle tasks, performing only one task at a time. We screen out information to deal with distractions overload which leads to "Inattention blindness." This is a big risk: **we look** but don't always see crucial things when we are distracted while driving. Sometimes the results are not too severe: missed exits, running red lights and stop signs, missing important signage and forgetting where you are going. Unfortunately, it can have deadly results. Crashes are highly likely, resulting in thousands of unnecessary injuries and deaths.

**Background:** The "National Safety Council" tracks vehicle crashes across our great Nation and has released some staggering facts:

- 1.6 million crashes per year can be attributed to cell phone talking and texting while driving.
- Every time you text and drive, you are 26 times more likely to be involved in a serious crash, which includes; reaching for device, dialing & talking and listening.
- Having your eyes off the road an average of 4-6 seconds when driving and texting is like having your eyes closed the equivalent length of a football field.
- 1 in 5 drivers confessed to surfing the web while driving, this includes Twitter, Facebook & GPS.
- Inexperienced drivers tend to speed and follow the vehicle in front of them too closely. This is a dangerous mix, especially when distracted by texting and driving.
- About 6 times more likely to cause an accident than driving intoxicated.
- The same as driving after 4 beers.
- Takes place by 800,000 drivers at any given time across the country.
- Slows your brake reaction speed by 18%.

**What employees must know:** Driving requires your full attention. There are 3 forms of distraction:

- Manual / Physical (hands leaving the steering wheel)
- Visual (eyes off the road)
- Cognitive (mind off the road)

Be aware- Texting involves all three of these distractions. **DO NOT TEXT AND DRIVE!!!!**

Truck drivers are the most unsupervised employee in a workforce. Know the laws in your state and have a company "cell phone use policy" in place. Where policies allow, Bluetooth is the only recommended device if talking is necessary. Step up and protect your employees and your property.

- Provide safety rules, review policies and laws
- Relay your company expectation's - this is the most important communication you can have to protect your employee's, company's assets and reputation
- Do not allow a truck driver to hit the road without this knowledge. By the way, your company's name on the truck should concern you enough to make sure you have the right truck driver driving your truck, you get what you accept.

For additional information on Distracted Driving, visit their website at [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org) Safety on the Road – Distracted Driving.

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## Safety Meeting for September 2014

### **Topic: CHIPPERS AND GRINDERS**

**Introduction:** Recently, BIO MASS has become a main stay of the forest product industry. Opportunities have come that allow loggers to increase production by adding in-woods chippers and grinders. Along with the increase use of these machines at the job site, has come an increase in severe injuries. Improper lockout/tagout procedures are the contributing factor in all cases. Each incident was preventable. It does not matter if the chipper or hog is in a mill or the woods, they will maim or kill you if you do not follow proper procedures before servicing.

**Background:** Most often, injuries occur when employees failed to allow all moving parts to completely stop. On several occasions, severe lacerations, broken legs and facial bones, as well as amputations were the result of employees not heeding safety rules or following lockout procedures. Maintenance personnel did not allow enough time for the chipper wheel that holds the blades to stop rotating before opening doors to perform maintenance. Opening doors and removing guards before all parts are at a “Zero-energy state” will hurt or even kill the operators. During our investigations, employees seemed unaware or were improperly trained on the hazard(s) associated with machinery coast down time. One employee lost an arm and a leg because the hydraulic pressure on the rollers had not been bled off.

**What must an employee know:** Employers are required to develop, document, and implement **machine specific lockout/tagout procedures** for their equipment. Procedures must include all energy source(s) that may be a hazard or encountered during maintenance operations. Some of the most overlooked energy sources are air, hydraulics, and machinery **COAST DOWN TIME** for rotating or moving parts.

Training employees on lockout/tagout procedures is an OSHA requirement that ensures the safety of all employees. Educate them on the hazards (machinery coast down, electrical circuits, hydraulic and pneumatic systems, spring energy, gravity systems, or any other) associated with equipment and machinery. Some lockout/tagout guidelines that should be included in your program are:

- ❑ **Neutralize energy source(s)**  
Disconnect electricity. Block movable parts. Release or block spring energy. Drain or bleed hydraulic and pneumatic lines. Lower suspended parts to rest positions. Allow machinery coast down time for parts rotation.
- ❑ **Lockout devices**  
Use only locks, hasps, and covers identified for lockout purposes. Each authorized worker must have a singularly identified lock.
- ❑ **Tagout power sources**  
Tag machine controls, pressure lines, starter switches and suspended parts. Tags should include your name, department, how to reach you, the date and time of tagging and reason for the lockout.
- ❑ **Verify equipment isolation**  
Check that all workers are clear. Ensure locking devices are securely placed. Attempt normal start-up procedures. Return controls to the off or neutral position.
- ❑ **Releasing machinery from LOTO**  
Inspect the area and equipment. Replace machine guards. Account for all tools and place them back into toolbox. Inform affected employees of machine start-up. Restore system connections.

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## Safety Briefing For October 2014

### **Topic: Slips, Trips, And Falls On Logging Operations**

**Introduction:** Recently the Department of Labor reports that slips, trips and falls cause 15% of all accidental deaths in the workplace. These injuries are a close second behind motor vehicle wrecks. Additionally, the National Safety Council reports that falls are the leading cause of unintentional injuries in the United States, resulting in 8.9 million visits to the emergency room annually. This year thus far, we experienced a large occurrence of slips, trips and falls in the logging operations.

**What must an employee know:** Companies need to have a training program specifically designed to prevent such accidents. The following are areas that employees should know:

#### **Slips** - What is a slip?

A slip occurs when there is too little friction between a person's feet and the walking surface.

##### **Types of slip hazards**

- Bark throughout the whole logging operation with special emphasis around the deck area.
- Different types of fluids on the equipment (example: hydraulic fluid).
- Rain, ice and or mud.
- Different type of debris build up around and on equipment steps.

#### **Trips** - What is a Trip?

A trip occurs when a person's foot contacts an object and they are thrown off balance.

##### **Types of trip hazards**

- Bark throughout the whole logging operation with special emphasis around the deck.
- Rocks and other debris on the landing.
- Vines.
- Hoses or cords around the service trucks.

#### **Falls** - What is a fall?

A fall can be caused by a number of things, mainly they are a result of a slip or trip.

##### **Types of fall hazards**

- Falls during logging operations largely occur around the deck and the causes are the same slip or trip hazards listed above.
- Most falls can be avoided if preventive measures are taken not to slip or trip.
- Maintain proper equipment i.e. steps and rails can reduce this risk.

#### **Preventive Measures**

- Keep work areas and equipment free of debris.
- Inspect equipment frequently to make sure safety features are properly installed and working.
- Maintain 3 points of contact during mounting and dismounting of all equipment.
- Make sure operators exit cabs the same way they mounted the machine (facing the cab).

Discuss and practice the above topics. These procedures should reduce this type of incident from occurring on your operations. REMEMBER!!!! **"Don't make your next step your last?"**

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## Safety Meeting for November 2014

### Topic: Fire Hazards on the Job

**Introduction:** In the last two years we experienced several horrific claims with employees throwing fuel onto an open flame. Even after we contacted all our policyholders to let them know of the dangers of this practice and injuries we experienced, we still had two injuries from an individual throwing gasoline onto an open fire. So here it is: **DO NOT POUR FUEL INTO A FIRE OR HOT EMBERS.**

**What must an employee know:** Your actions can lead to death or disfiguring injuries. Your actions from a moment of inattention, carelessness, or ignorance by trying to “HELP” a fire to start or burn hotter can change the rest of your life. Your careless act can mutilate, kill, and destroy everything that took a lifetime to build. Fire will take away your work place, your job, and possibly your life.

#### **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **DO NOT POUR FUEL ONTO OPEN FLAMES OR GLOWING ASHES.**
- Do not throw trash with plastic soda or water bottles into the fire. They will burst when the heat expands the gases trapped inside them and spray sparks and embers when the pressure is suddenly released.
- Do not pour waste oil as it may contain flammable materials that can flash and burn you.
- Remember that the ULSD diesel, also known as #1 Diesel, has a flash point at 100.4 degrees instead of the 140 degrees of #2 Diesel.
- Do not store fuel containers near open fires.
- Do not store flammable fuel, liquids, or gases near doors or exits in buildings.
- Do not try to help the fire along without knowing the hazards involved.

There are employees in the burn centers at several hospitals that failed to follow these guidelines. In one split second their lives and those of their families were changed forever.

Do not be in a hurry to become a statistic. Slow down, be patient and do not try to accelerate a fire with flammable/combustible liquids. Be smart as it is better to be safe than burned.

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## Safety Briefing for December 2014

### **Topic: Preventing an Accident**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that a "near miss" or "incident" is an unplanned event that has the potential for property loss or injury and prevents a task from being completed. It has been reported that incidents or near misses preceded 75 percent of on-the-job injuries.

**Background:** How do you handle those minor accidents or near misses in your workplace? What's your attitude to an incident? Do you feel momentarily relieved an incident wasn't any worse and return to your routine? Are you told or do you tell workers to be more careful next time? Is there a plan for preventing mishaps?

**What must an employee know:** Developing a preventive, not reactive, safety program should be an on-going role of everyone. The warning signs of "near misses" cannot be neglected. Understand what happened before you try to reduce or control any hazards. The following questions can help you analyze the cause of an incident:

- Was the worker using unsafe practices?
- Was the worker violating any safety practices?
- Were conditions unsafe?
- Did the worker have proper lighting?
- Was the worker taking short-cuts?
- Is the worker accident-prone?
- Was the near-victim authorized to be in that work area?

Everyone should be especially interested in each incident or near miss occurring in their work area. Reporting the incident or near miss is key in preventing future occurrences and should never be viewed as "telling on someone". The accident that you prevent could be you own. Consider the following to assist in preventing accidents:

- Determine if proper safety practices were being used when a "near miss" occurred.
- Did a lack of skills or possibly a training concern lead up to the incident?
- Has enough time been spent on loss-control? Remember that accident prevention controls losses. Conduct safety inspections of working conditions and practices each time you walk through your work area.
- Share safety responsibilities with employees. Repeat your mishap prevention message to all your workers, not just those involved in a "near miss."
- Hold safety meetings following incidents so everyone hears about problem areas or about mistakes to avoid in the future. They need to understand those one-time minor injuries or damages could be extremely serious next time.

You don't need to wait for a serious injury or accident in order to analyze what changes need to be made in working conditions or safety practices. Rather, use an incident or near miss as an opportunity to find and eliminate causes of problems that could result in injuries or property-damaging accidents.

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