

**ACCIDENT INJURY & FATALITY SUMMARY:  
INVESTIGATIONS RELEVANT TO [SIC CODE: 0783]**

**AS REPORTED THROUGH U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (OSHA)  
INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (IMIS)  
[01-01-2006 TO 12/31/2006]**

*In keeping with the specific occupational health & safety interests of the OSHA & Tree Care Industry Association Alliance, this data is specifically relevant to SIC Code: 0783 (Ornamental Shrub and Tree Services).*

*The following summary was compiled from OSHA's IMIS reporting system and encompasses all injury and fatality accident data (available as of 09/04/07) and reported for incidents occurring within the twelve-month period from January 01, 2006 through December 31, 2006. Data was compiled to IMIS through standard site reporting [by OSHA personnel] via OSHA Forms-170.*

- I. Total Accidents**
- II. Fatalities**
- III. Non-fatal Injuries**
- IV. Narrative Summaries of Accident Injuries & Fatalities**

**I. TOTAL ACCIDENTS**

There were **(75)** accidents associated with SIC code 0783 during the specified time period. **Fifty-one** (68.0%) of these accidents resulted in fatalities, and **24** (32.0%) of the incidents reported were *non-fatal* injuries.

All accidents involved males aged 19 through 72. The mean age for accident victims was 38.14 years; median age was 36 years.

Accidents were reported from 25 states. Table-1 summarizes them with respect to relative contribution of nationwide accidents from each state.

**TABLE-1**

<b>State</b>	<b>N=</b>	<b>% Total</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>N=</b>	<b>% Total</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>N=</b>	<b>% Total</b>
CA	32	42.6%	NY	2	2.6%	MS	1	1.3%
VA	7	9.3%	WA	2	2.6%	NH	1	1.3%
CT	4	5.3%	AL	1	1.3%	OK	1	1.3%
FL	3	4.0%	AR	1	1.3%	PA	1	1.3%
OH	3	4.0%	AZ	1	1.3%	TN	1	1.3%
IL	2	2.6%	LA	1	1.3%	TX	1	1.3%
MA	2	2.6%	MD	1	1.3%	WI	1	1.3%
MN	2	2.6%	MI	1	1.3%	-----XXXXX-----		
NC	2	2.6%	MO	1	1.3%	-----XXXXX-----		

Chart 1 represents the relative frequency of total accidents (both fatal and non-fatal) as distributed throughout CY2006.

CHART 1

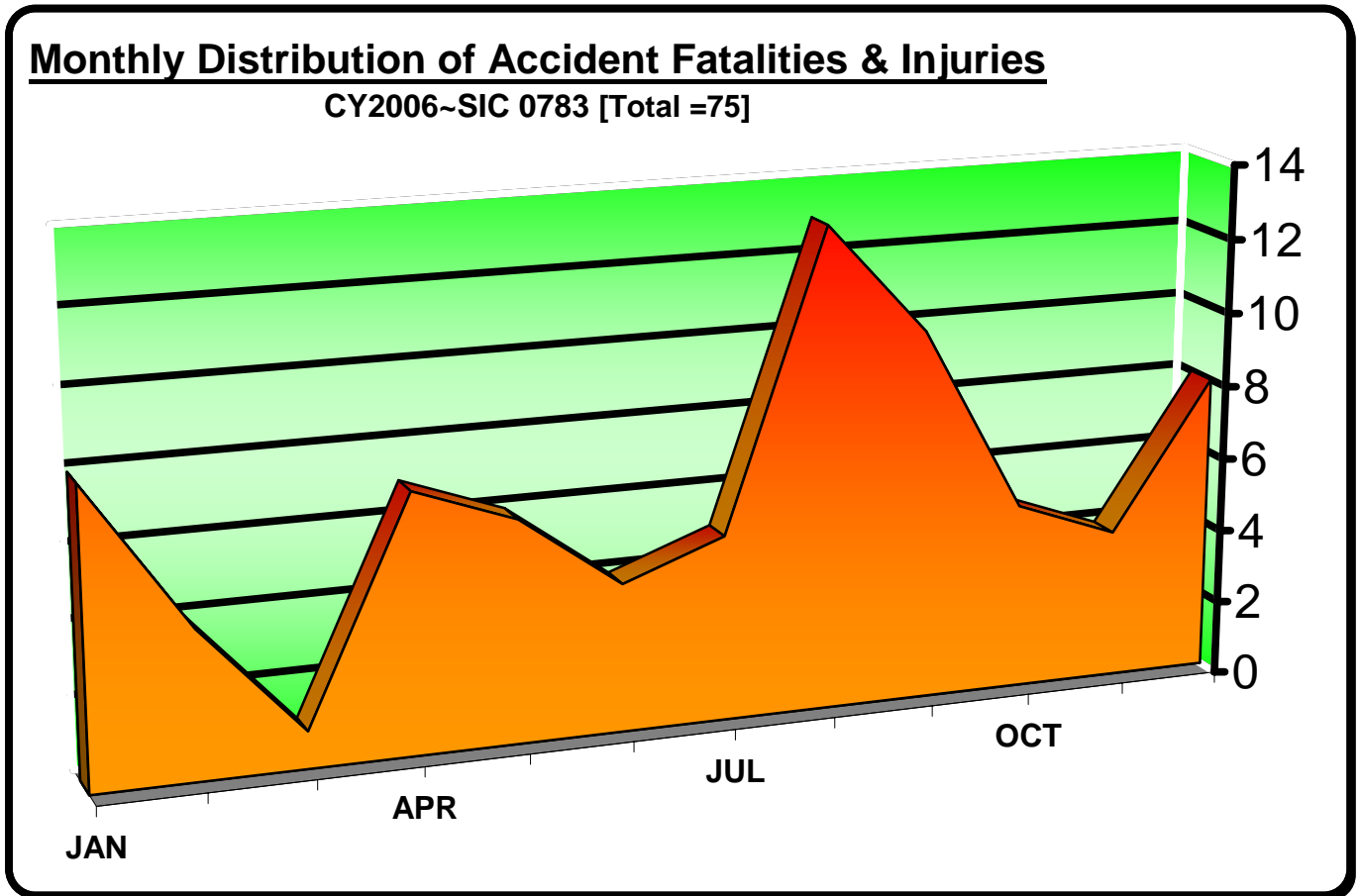
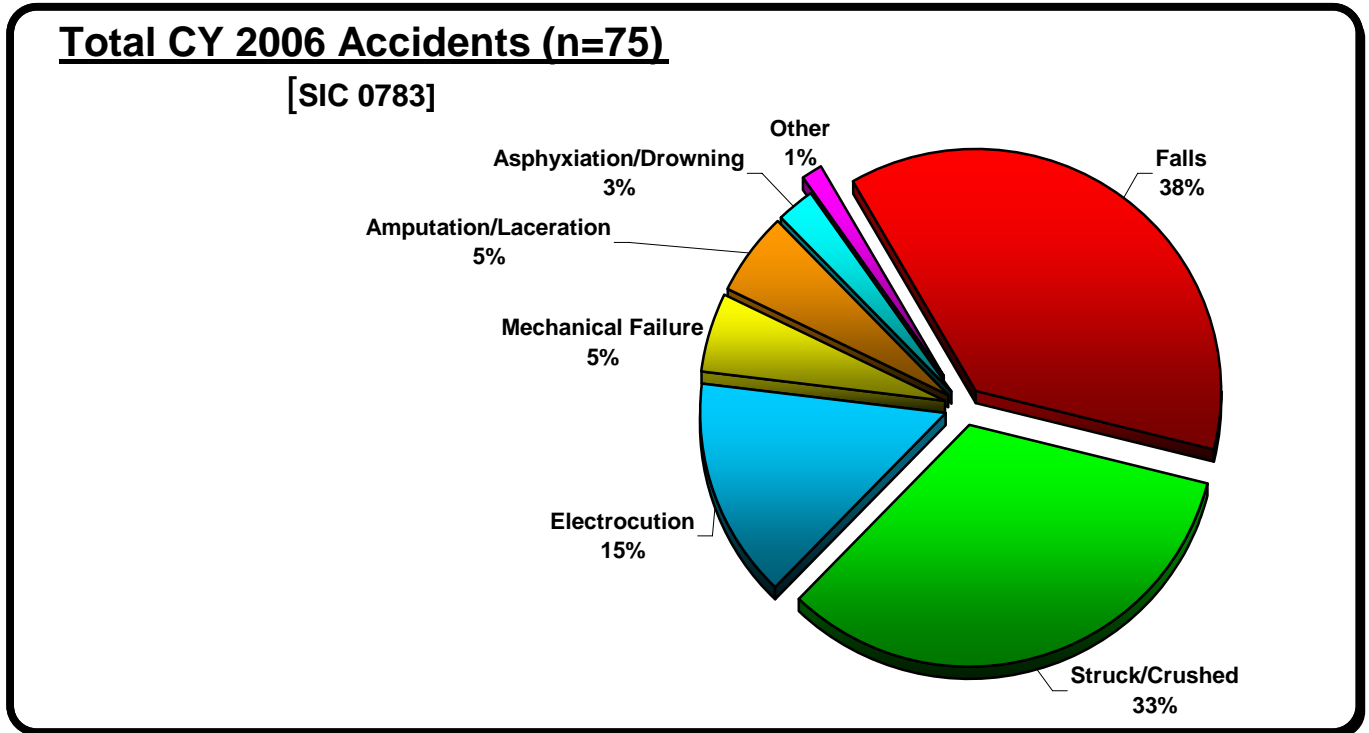


Chart 1 suggests that in 2006, accident injuries associated with the ornamental shrub and tree services industry occurred most frequently during the summer/fall months of August and September. This was followed by the winter months of December and January, which had the second-highest accident frequencies.

**Chart 2** indicates *all accidents* for SIC Code 0783 in 2006. Accidents were categorized as: falls, employees being struck or crushed, electrocutions, mechanical failures, amputations/lacerations, asphyxiations/drownings, and “other”.

**CHART 2**



**Chart 2** indicates that the primary cause of accidents within ornamental shrub & tree services industry in 2006 was falls (38%). The second leading cause of fatality was workers being struck or crushed [generally by tree branches or equipment] (33%). These were followed by electrocutions (15%), and mechanical failures (5%).

## **II. FATALITIES**

There were **(51)** fatalities associated with SIC code 0783 in 2006. All fatalities were males aged 19 through 72. The mean age for fatality victims was 39.74 years; median age was 38 years.

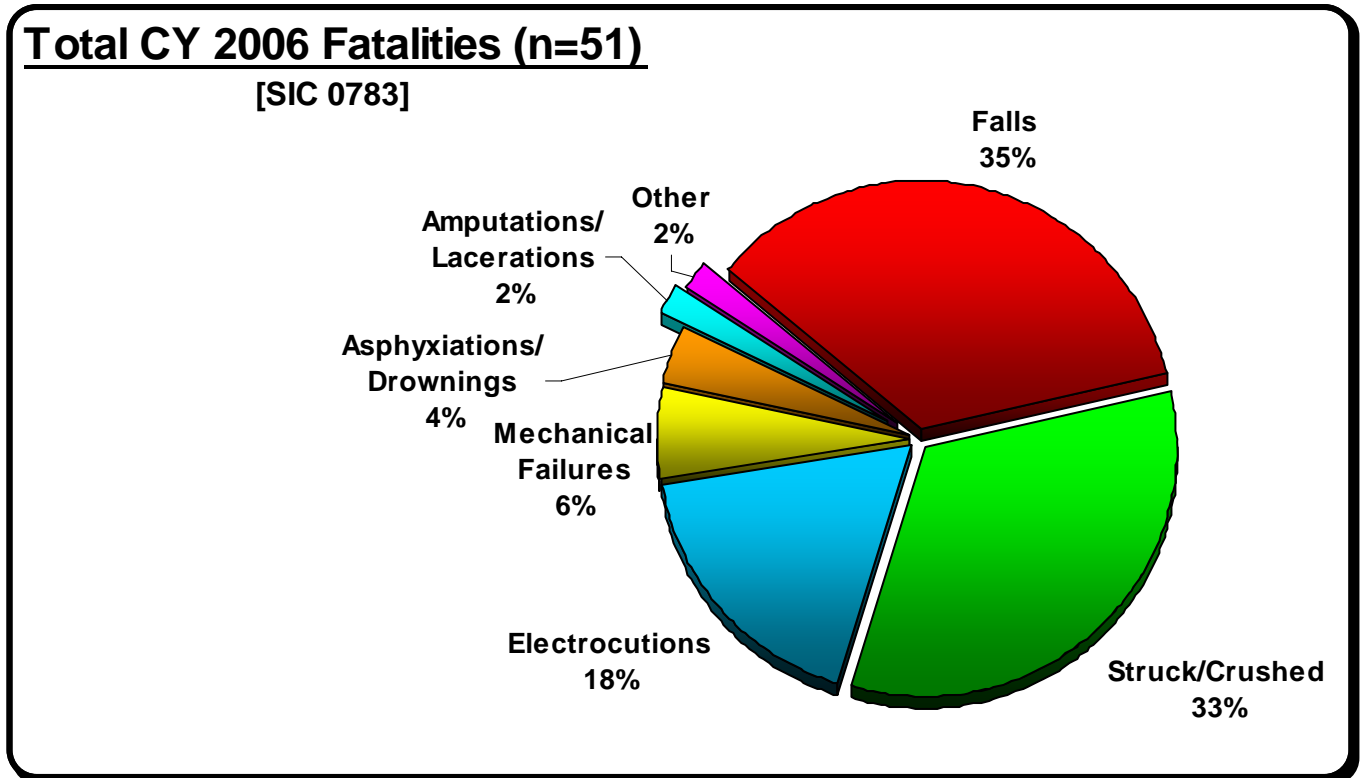
Fatalities were reported from 24 states. **Table 2** summarizes them with respect to relative contribution of nationwide fatalities from each state.

**TABLE 2**

State	N=	% Total	State	N=	% Total	State	N=	% Total
CA	11	21.6%	NC	2	3.9%	MI	1	2.0%
VA	7	13.7%	NY	2	3.9%	MO	1	2.0%
OH	3	5.9%	WA	2	3.9%	MS	1	2.0%
FL	3	5.9%	AL	1	2.0%	OK	1	2.0%
CT	2	4.0%	AR	1	2.0%	PA	1	2.0%
IL	2	3.9%	AZ	1	2.0%	TN	1	2.0%
MA	2	3.9%	LA	1	2.0%	TX	1	2.0%
MN	2	3.9%	MD	1	2.0%	WI	1	2.0%

**Chart 3** indicates all *fatalities* for SIC Code 0783 in 2006. Fatality causes were categorized as: falls, employees being struck or crushed, electrocutions, mechanical failures, amputations/lacerations, asphyxiations/drownings, and “other”.

**CHART 3**



**Chart 3** indicates that the primary cause of fatalities within the ornamental shrub & tree services industry was falls (35%). The second leading cause of fatality was workers being struck or crushed [generally by tree branches or equipment] (33%). These were followed by electrocutions (18%), and mechanical failures (6%).

### III. NON-FATAL INJURIES

There were **(24)** non-fatal injuries associated with SIC code 0783 and reported via OSHA Form-170 to IMIS during the specified time period.

All non-fatal injuries were males aged 20 through 64. The mean age for non-fatal injuries was 34.60 years; median age was 33 years.

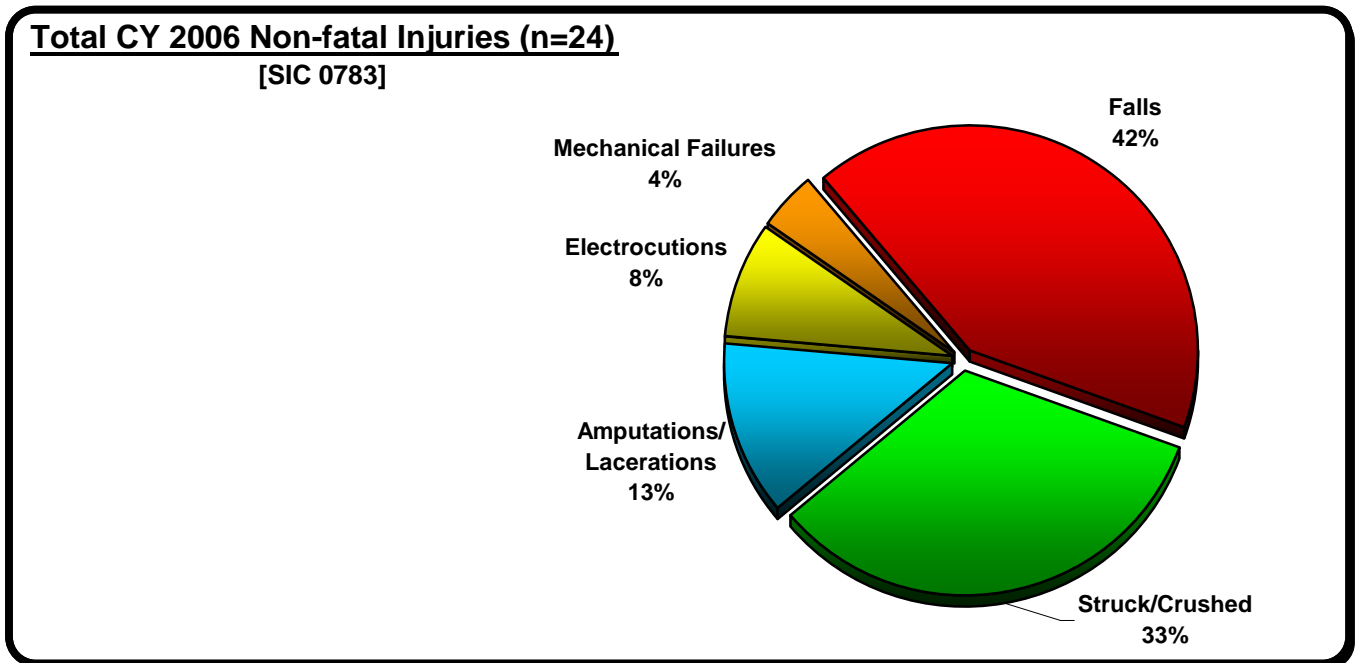
Non-fatal injuries were reported from 3 states. **Table 3** summarizes them with respect to relative contribution of nationwide fatalities from each state.

**TABLE-3**

<u>State</u>	<u>N=</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>N=</u>	<u>% Total</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>N=</u>	<u>% Total</u>
CA	21	87.5%	CT	2	8.3%	NH	1	4.2%

**Chart 4** indicates all *non-fatal injuries* by cause for SIC Code 0783 in 2006. Non-fatal accident causes were categorized as: falls, employees being struck or crushed, electrocutions, mechanical failures, and amputations/lacerations.

**CHART 4**



**Chart 4** indicates that the primary cause of non-fatal injuries within the ornamental shrub & tree services industry was falls (42%). The second leading cause of fatality was workers being struck or crushed, generally by tree branches or equipment (33%). These were followed by amputations/lacerations (13%) and electrocutions (8%).

## **IV. NARRATIVE SUMMARIES OF ACCIDENT INJURIES & FATALITIES**

### ***January 2006***

#### **1) Fall From Tree (NON-FATAL)**

Three employees were assigned to trim the trees and bushes of the residence this rainy day in the backyard of the residence performing their duties. According to the injured employee, at the time of the accident, he was on the third step of the 14 foot ladder trimming a tree. The other two employees were next to the ladder picking up the trimmed branches that fell. It was drizzling at the time and the employee lost his balance, slipped and fell from the ladder. He fell approximately nine to ten feet into the ground. He suffered a broken right femur and he spent three days in the hospital.

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#### **2) Fall from Tree**

An employee performing tree trimming/removal apparently cut his safety line and fell 30-35 feet to the ground. He died as a result of his injuries.

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#### **3) Fall Out of Elevating Work Platform**

Employee sustained a fatal fall to the ground after falling more than 30 feet from the basket of an elevated aerial device. The employer is in the business of tree work, trimming and maintenance. The deceased employee had been working for the employer for 12 years prior to the accident. At the time of the accident, the deceased was working as a foreman for the employer. Responsibilities for foreman include, but are not limited to, overseeing his assigned crew and equipment, tree trimming and maintenance work, observe their crews in the field and make sure each employee is observing safety procedures. On the day of the accident, the deceased foreman was assigned to palm trees. The foreman had two other individuals working as grounds man. He was responsible of trimming the date palms from a basket of an elevated aerial device while the other two employees were assigned to clean up and load the tree trimmings on the truck. According to witness 1, after lunch he observed the deceased entering the basket of the articulating aerial device and was in the basket for about 10 minutes before the accident occurred. He saw the foreman was not wearing the harness during the cutting of the palm seeds. Furthermore, witness No 2 also observed the foreman ascend on the articulating boom without the body harness. Both witnesses were picking the trash when a man across the street said, "Hey, your friend has fallen!" Witness No. 1 then turned around and saw the deceased first hit the aluminum awning of the nearby apartment building before hitting the ground.

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#### **4) Fell Out of Tree Trim Boom Basket; Not Tied Off**

An employee sustained fatal blunt force injuries after falling 35 ft from the bucket of a high lift boom truck while performing tree trimming operations. The victim had not been secured while working in the bucket.

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#### **5) Struck by Chainsaw (NON-FATAL)**

An employee seriously injured himself with a chainsaw while trimming a tree limb. The victim sustained a deep laceration to the inside of his upper aspect of his left thigh. The victim was standing on a limb and reached through his legs to cut a limb with the chainsaw. The limb snagged a branch and sent the rotating teeth of the blade into the upper thigh of the victim. The victim was transported to the hospital where he received sutures for a deep laceration.

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#### **6) Fall from Elevation**

Victim was as an independent contractor working with another independent contractor on the site. They were hired by individual homeowner to perform tree trimming and removal work. The victim was trimming a tree at a height of approximately 50 feet using his own boom truck. He was elevated in the bucket when the hydraulic cylinder on the boom broke and caused the bucket to fall to the ground below.

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### **7) Tree Fell on Employee Fatal**

The employee had been struck by a 50-foot felling tree and had died at the scene while paramedics were tending to him. This tree service company is responsible for cutting and processing dead, decaying trees or trees that are dying. The company has 20 employees and only 15 were onsite on the day of the accident. The tree cutting crews are made up of a foreman and one or two helpers. In this case, the deceased was the only one helping the foreman for this day.

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### **8) Electrocutation**

Victim was trimming tree branch approximately 40" from 19,920 volt primary electrical service. Branch from tree contacted power line and victim was electrocuted.

## ***February 2006***

### **9) Probable Suicide**

The deceased had called his lone employee this morning and told him he was needed to come help get the muffler back on the truck (a 2 ton, with a dump bed and a knuckle-boom loader), and then to go get some wire. (The deceased had said he planned to get the muffler back on, and go cut trees at a customer's house) After making the phone call to the lone employee, the deceased then left his house and headed across the road to the arena-shed, where the dump truck was parked. The deceased's wife heard the truck engine running when she left for work that morning. The deceased was last seen alive by his wife as she passed by. She said her husband was squatting down between the cab and rear wheels, on the driver's side of the truck. When the lone employee arrived at ~8:00 AM, he found the deceased with his neck pinned between the dump-bed's channel beam and the truck's A-frame beam, on the passenger side of the truck. The truck's engine was still running, and the cab's passenger-side door was open. This death is being investigated as a suicide.

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### **10) Crush Left Thumb (NON-FATAL)**

A climber suffered amputation of the left thumb while attempting to reinstall a bucket on a front loader. The injured employee was treated at the hospital. The facility involved in the accident is small tree trimming company. The EE#1 had been working there for approximately 2 years, performing duties of a tree trimmer, including climbing and trimming trees. At the time of the accident, EE#1 was performing a rarely assigned task of replacing the end attachment of the front loader in the attempt to restore the bucket on the front loader. To reinstall the bucket of a front loader, the bucket would need to be positioned and the linkages aligned to allow pins to be installed. The pins were not installed with the aid of a drift. At the time of the accident EE#1 had successfully completed the installation of 3 out of the 4 pins on the front loader. EE#1 was attempting to position the 4th pin. EE#1 was communicating with the operator to position the hydraulics to align the holes. The operator had overshot the hole twice and on the third attempt EE#1 stated his hand slipped into a "quarter-sized" hole. The injured employee was working with/in close proximity to the operator and interviews were conducted with the operator and the injured EE#1. The investigation concluded that the employee was not trained by the employer in the proper techniques to reinstall the bucket of a front loader.

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### **11) Fall from Tree (NON-FATAL)**

A tree trimmer sustained a serious injury from a fall from a ladder from a height of approximately 17 ft. The employee was working for a small tree trimming company performing tree trimming operations at a client's workplace. The injured employee was hospitalized for 43 days and had surgery. At the time of the accident, the injured employee was standing on an extension ladder approximately 17 feet from the ground below. The ladder was resting on a tree which the employee intended to trim. In trimming the branch with a saw; the branch fell towards the ladder striking the rails of the ladder. This employee was shaken from the ladder and fell to the ground. The ladder remained upright throughout the incident.

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### **12) Six Foot Fall from Ladder (NON-FATAL)**

The injured was trimming lowest branch 12 feet high, 15 feet long, and 4 inches in diameter on an oak tree from the 16 feet extension ladder. The branch came down before the injured finished the cut due to the heavy weight at the tip of the branch. When the branch came down, it hit the bottom of the ladder and caused the injured to fall. There were some other employees working around the area. The injured was hospitalized for several months.

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## ***March 2006***

### **13) Crush**

The victim was preparing to dump a load of wood from the bucket of a backhoe when the left-front tire (which was parked beside a large hole approximately 8' long and 26-27 inch deep and 4' wide) collapsed into the hole resulting in the backhoe overturning. The victim was thrown from the operator's seat and subsequently crushed by the roll-over protective structure when it fell on him.

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## ***April 2006***

### **14) Electrocution**

Victim was employed by tree care company when he was electrocuted while trimming tree limbs around a 14,400 volt single phase overhead high voltage line. The victim was working from an aerial lift bucket truck, using a hydraulic pruner when he simultaneously came in contact with the un-insulated phase (conductor) and neutral electrical lines causing a severe electrical arc flash across his chin and neck area. The electrical arc caused the victims clothing and flesh to burn. The victim fell unconscious in the elevated bucket which was promptly lowered by his coworkers. Water was poured onto the victim to extinguish fire from his body, and he was removed from the bucket by his coworkers. Repeated attempts at CPR by the victims coworkers failed to resuscitate him. The work was being performed as a result of a contract with the local electrical cooperative to clear trees/brush from their electrical transmission lines.

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### **15) Tractor Tipped Over and Fell on Employee**

An employee was hauling a load of trees down a steep gravel road. The employee was operating a tractor that was pulling a hay wagon with a total of 21 spruce trees. The trees weighed approximately 850 lbs apiece. As the employee was traveling down the hill, both the tractor and trailer had flipped over. The employee was crushed and killed.

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### **16) Fell Approx 30 Feet from Tree**

An employee suffered a fatal fall from a tree he was climbing to trim. The owner agreed and observed EE#1 begin his ascent using tree spikes, harness, 2 lanyards, climbing rope and a small gas chain saw. The owner observed EE#1 using proper climbing technique to scale the tree. The owner and EE#2 returned to the task of cleaning up cut limbs and slashing some 20-30 feet from the base of the redwood tree when the owner heard some branch and leaf noise and then a thud. The owner and EE#2 rushed over to find EE#1 near the base of the tree on the ground with his climbing gear attached. The owner removed EE#1's harness and the owner and EE#2 moved EE#1 to a flat area where CPR was administered with no success as there appeared to be extensive chest damage. EE#1 was placed in the front seat of the owner's truck and transported to the nearest hospital. (Note: the accident area does not receive cell phone reception). EE#1 was pronounced dead upon arriving at the hospital and the Sheriff was called to the scene. It appears #1 fell while trying to climb above the first and second limb of the redwood tree at the height of approximately 75-90 feet above the ground. Normal practice requires using the lowest lanyard below the limb then the second lanyard above the limb while boot spikes are set in the bark. Then the bottom lanyard may be loosened.

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### **17) Employee Struck By Tree (NON-FATAL)**

An employee of a tree service company was seriously injured when struck by the top of a tree that had been felled. Four tree workers doing power line clearing work for were falling pine trees. The snow in that area was deep in some spots and contributed to the accident. The victim was felling a pine tree and had made his back cut, the tree started to fall and the victim turned to start his escape route from the base of the tree when his left foot sank in deep snow stopping his retreat. The tree, while falling through other trees nearby, had its top sheared off by the branches of these nearby trees and that tree top came down and struck the victim on his head. The victim was taken to the hospital for treatment of a skull fracture.

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### **18) Fall from Palm Tree (NON-FATAL)**

A tree climber received fractured back from a fall from a palm tree. Employer is engaged in providing tree service and landscape. At the time of the accident they were performing tree trimming of palms. Employee climbed the tree using climbing spikes to a height of approximate 80 feet using a safety lanyard that was wrapped around the tree trunk. He threw another safety rope to (tread through) the fronds of the palm when the rope slipped out, and the safety rope around the trunk slipped out causing the employee to fall to the ground below.

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### **19) Sole Owner Tree Trimmer Crushed By Palm Fronds**

Case involves an unlicensed tree trimming contractor who was hired by a homeowner to remove dead palm fronds. The tree trimmer died as a result of asphyxiation when the palm frond skirt above him suddenly released from the tree trunk, trapping him on the tree. According to witness statements, the deceased tree trimmer had two day laborers assisting him with the stripping of dead palm fronds on two trees at a residence that the homeowner rented out to tenants. The tree trimmer had been belted off to the tree via a positioning belt at a height of about 25 feet. At one point, the tree trimmer pulled a palm frond that resulted in the entire upper section of the remaining palm fronds to collapse down on top of him. Two laborers on the ground attempted to rescue the victim but were unsuccessful. The victim was extricated from the tree by the county fire and rescue squad. It was determined that the homeowner of the residence had hired the victim via his partner to remove the dead palm fronds from the trees.

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### **20) Worker Struck By a Falling Branch**

The worker was struck by a falling branch.

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**May 2006**

## **21) Fall from Tree (NON-FATAL)**

An individual was working on the trimming of trees in the city strip in front of the home located at a residence. Individual is a full time regular tree climber and company is primarily involved in tree trimming and removal services. The individual lost his footing while stepping from one branch to another and fell to the ground below (approximately 10 feet onto grass). Individual reportedly uses ropes while climbing and was using them at the time of the accident, however, he had untied while moving from one branch to another where he would re-tie off. Individual was transported to hospital for evaluation.

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## **22) Trimming a Tree and Was Electrocuted.**

Employee was in the process of conducting a tree trimming operation on residential property. While in the tree he made contact with the overhead power lines rated at 4800-volts. Conditions were that it had rained the night before and the pine trees were still wet.

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## **23) Cut Branch Swung Over and Landed on Employee (NON-FATAL)**

Witness #1, witness #2, and the injured employee were engaged in a tree trimming operation at private residence. Witness #1 had climbed up into the tree and was cutting branches while the injured employee and witness #2 were cleaning debris on the ground. The tree was approximately 20 feet high and 12 inches in diameter. Witness #1 cut a branch approximately 3 inches in diameter and 8 feet long which fell and struck the injured employee in the head. The injured employee was hospitalized. The injured employee suffered permanent brain damage and is no longer able to speak or move about. The injured employee is to be transferred to a long term care institution permanently. The employer failed to ensure that the injured employee was wearing approved head protection when the accident occurred. The employer also failed to train the injured employee on safety procedures during tree trimming such as keeping clear of the area under the tree during trimming. The injured employee had worked only two days with the employer and was not experienced in tree trimming.

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## **24) Crushed By Equipment**

Deceased was pulling broken branches from a tree caused by hurricane Rita, and somehow the forklift he was using started to tip to the left side the side of the forklift cage. The employee jumped off and started to run and the boom of the lift hit him on the left shoulder.

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## **25) Tree Hit another Tree and Rolled Over, Crushing Employee.**

Earlier in the morning employees had topped a pine tree near a home, in which the top of the pine was left leaning against another tree for approximately 30 minutes prior to the accident. The victim, without cutting a notch in a 15" diameter pine tree, cut straight across the tree apparently attempting to take down the standing tree top. The tree and stump split (into a "barber chair.") As the falling tree hit the tree-top and the tree it was resting against, it kicked up and started rolling. The victim was crushed and pinned to the ground by the rolling tree as it continued over the tree-top.

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## **26) Struck-By Falling Tree**

The employee was working cutting down trees. He and several other employees were holding onto ropes and pulling on the tree which was in the process of being cut down. The employee misjudged the length

of the tree and jumped down the embankment to get away from the falling tree. The tree struck the employee in the head. The employee was pronounced dead at the hospital.

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## **June 2006**

### **27) Aerial Lift Tipped Over in Staging Yard**

During initial start up and equipment inspection of a bucket truck, the employee had extended the boom from the operational basket controls to confirm boom test. However, the employee failed to ensure the truck equipment outriggers were down before test. The truck's front axle was on uneven ground. Employee had 61'-11" extended out over top of the truck before truck turned over. The truck turned over to the passenger side taking with it 60 feet of boom. Employee was slammed into the adjacent road way. Employee suffered server head trauma and was pronounced dead shortly before arriving at the hospital.

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### **28) Struck Against**

An employee was in an aerial lift basket while trimming trees for utility line clearance. A pin on the aerial lift boom hydraulic ram dislodged, causing the upper boom section and basket to fall and strike against the skidder to which the aerial lift was attached.

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### **29) Electrocution (Tree Trimming)**

The victim was trimming trees near an overhead power-line rated at 22,000 volts when his "flip line" from his climbing gear came into contact with the power-line, causing him to be electrocuted.

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### **30) Worker Made Contact With 8,000 Volt Power Line.**

Employee was trimming a palm tree next to an 8,000 volt power line that was within four feet of the tree. As he was climbing down he made contact to the power line with his back causing the electrocution.

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## **July 2006**

### **31) Electrocuted From Power Line**

The deceased was a tree trimmer working in a tree and was electrocuted after contacting a power line.

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### **32) Electrocution**

The worker was positioning himself in a tree near a power line in order to cut branches out of the tree. The worker apparently contacted a power line (7620 Volts to ground) that was 33 inches from the tree while rigging his positioning gear and was electrocuted.

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### **33) Tree Trimming Bucket**

EE#1 was cutting tree branches with a chain saw standing in the bucket of a truck mounted aerial device. The boom was raised to a height of approximately 30 feet. Suddenly there was an audible "pop " sound. The arm of the boom fell on the truck's rack first causing a jarring effect where as the bucket hit the pavement. EE # 1 was thrown out of the bucket and hit his head on the pavement five feet away from the bucket 911 was called and EE#1 was immediately rushed to the hospital where he expired. EE#1 sustained multiple head and face injuries. Nine turntable bolts were missing at the time of accident. Based upon the interviews conducted with the primary and correcting employer and documentation developed during the course of this investigation, out of the missing 9 turn table bolts, 8 bolts were found

inside the pedestal. However one bolt was not traceable. Daily visual inspections and also periodic inspections as specified by the manufacturer of the turntable bolts that fastens the pedestal to the turntable as specified by the manufacturer was not performed. If regular inspections were conducted this accident would not have occurred.

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### **34) Employee Fell While Engaged in Tree Cutting Activities.**

One employee was engaged in tree cutting activities and fell approximately 53 feet to the ground below. Medical officials were notified and treated the victim on site. Victim was treated on site and transported to the hospital, where he later died.

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### **35) Fall from Bucket Truck**

Two employees were tasked with removing a diseased Chestnut tree as part of a local village contract to remove 10 trees. EE #1 had been working out of a bucket truck and had removed all of the limbs and upper sections of the tree. There was a 24.5 foot section of tree left standing. EE #1 made a conventional notch and a back cut leaving over 2 inches of hinge wood on the 2 foot diameter stump. When the tree did not fall, EE #1 went back up into the bucket truck, and applied pressure to the tree with the bucket. The tree started to move; the bucket slipped off the side and ejected EE#1 into the air, above the bucket. EE#1 then came down onto the rim of the bucket, striking his head and face, and proceeded to fall 18 feet to the sidewalk. EE#1 was not breathing when EE#2 reached him. No PPE was being used, and the aerial lift was not being used properly.

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## **August 2006**

### **36) Bucket Disengaged From Boom**

While using a hydraulic boom truck to trim branches on a tree, the boom fell-- coming to rest in the fork of a branch on the tree causing the bucket to break loose from the boom allowing the victim to fall approximately 25 feet to the ground.

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### **37) Employee Fell Off a Tree**

The employee was 25-30 feet up and cutting a tree branch when it snapped from the tree trunk. The employee fell 25 - 30 feet head-first to the pavement and sustained fatal injuries.

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### **38) Electrocution**

Employee was killed as a result of contacting a 7,200 V power line with a tree branch. The employee (who was also the owner) spoke primarily Spanish to his one employee. The owner was in a tree cutting branches off and lowering them to the ground. The owner had fall protection on during the operation. At the time of the fatality the owner was in the tree cutting branches. The owner had thrown a branch down to his employee on the ground. The branch that he threw struck the power line which caused it to come back and contact the owner in the chest. The owner grabbed the branch when it struck him and was electrocuted through the hand and chest. The company had been incorporated for approximately 2 months. It is unknown if the owner had previous experience or was trained in tree trimming. It was raining at the time of the accident and had been for most of the day. The company had no safety program.

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### **39) Fall 18" From a Doorway (NON-FATAL)**

The employer did not report this accident to the Division. Landscaping company provides full service landscape management and grounds maintenance to planned urban developments, condominium

associations, industrial parks and municipalities. Services include landscape maintenance, tree services, irrigation system management and retrofit, meter analysis (wire tracing and clock repair), concrete removal and replacement, masonry, renovation, lawn care, pest control, regular walkthroughs and 24-hour emergency service. Along with landscaping (C27) and tree service (D49) licenses, company also hold a general building contractor's license (B) and a general engineering contractor's license (A). The site accident is a one story house under renovation to be turned into an office building. EE#1 was walking on a ramp to exit the building when he lost his balance. He jumped off the ramp (a distance less than 1 foot). EE#1 landed with stiff legs and as a result he sustained a serious injury to his hip. The ramp was made of a 3/4 inch plywood sheet, 8 foot in length and spanning the width of the door opening. The threshold of the door opening was 18" above grade. The ramp was not secured or supported so as to avoid deflection and springing action.

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#### **40) Buried in Mulch**

An employee was operating a combination loader and excavator to move mulch from a pile that was approximately 30-feet high. He somehow became buried in it. The employee was not in the equipment when he was found. The employee was a co-owner of the company.

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#### **41) Employee Fall**

An employee without fall protection fell from a vehicle mounted elevating and rotating work platform while attempting to reposition the work platform and boom combination. The employee was engaged in tree trimming operations when the boom supporting his work platform contacted and became impacted against a previously trimmed tree part causing a stall in the platform movement. The employee was thrown from the work platform as he repositioned to release the boom from the impaction. The employee attempted to grab a line suspended from the tree being trimmed. He continued the fall vertically and struck his head on a concrete walkway upon impact.

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#### **42) Employee Received an Electric Shock While Trimming Tree (NON-FATAL)**

EE#1 was assisted by two other employees and a supervisor. They were assigned to trim two trees at two trailers of a trailer park. The president of the company was told by his estimator that no electrical power lines were in the area of the two trees. The president relayed this information to EE#1's supervisor. The customer requested that the tree at one specific trailer be trimmed first as the top portion of the tree had broken halfway off due to a previous wind storm and was lying on top of the trailer awning. EE#1 put on his aluminum climbing spurs with steel spikes, glasses, gloves and work positioning equipment (body belt, safety straps and ropes). He climbed the tree to almost the top and then tied off around the tree. EE#1 cut the remaining portion of the tree off but because the tree and branches were so large and wouldn't fall to the ground, he asked EE#2 to cut the bottom of the branches off. As he was attempting to get the tree and branches down a portion of the tree touched a 7.2kV power line. EE#1 received an electric shock and was knocked unconscious for approximately five minutes. The supervisor called 911, the fire department responded, and EE#1 recovered and was assisted by EE#2 in getting down to the ground. EE#1 was taken to a local hospital and was hospitalized and treated for burns to the left side of his forehead, back of his left shoulder, upper left arm, inside of his right foot and a burn/hole in his right calf. The 7.2kV power line could not be seen from the front of the trailer due to the large amount of tree foliage, but it could be seen at the other trailer which was next door and was to be the second tree to be trimmed.

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#### **43) Employee Caught in Wood Chipper**

Fatal injury. Additional info not available through IMIS as of 09/04/07

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#### **44) Struck By 150 Pound Branch, Head Injury**

The injured was an owner of the company. The project was to trim some branches which had grown over the property's wood fence to the sidewalk and traffic road. Toward the end of the work, the injured walked up to the chipper on the sidewalk to turn it off. A small branch above (2 inches in diameter, 10 feet long, and 12 to 15 feet high) broke and fell on his head. There were two witnesses who saw the branch coming down. They worked on the ground, 20 feet away from the injured. The injured was taken to the hospital. As a result of the accident, the injured suffered serious head injury. The injured was pronounced dead at the hospital after few hours.

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#### **45) Cut by Chain Saw (NON-FATAL)**

This employer is a tree trimming contractor. EE#1 works for the company as a tree trimmer. EE#1 was in a tree approximately 7 feet above the ground. EE#1 used a small gasoline driven chain saw to cut a limb. EE#1 had the chain saw above him while cutting the limb. The chain saw bound. EE#1 pulled the chain saw loose. The saw blade struck EE#1 on his right forearm. EE#1 received a cut approximately 4-inches long. He was taken to the hospital for treatment.

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#### **46) Fall from Elevation**

Employee was in a truck mounted aerial lift, approximately 40 feet above ground level, using a pole mounted hydraulically driven chain saw to trim tree limbs along a distribution power line. He was wearing and properly using a body harness and lanyard. The aerial lift boom suddenly snapped completely in two about 2 feet above the boom knuckle causing the upper section with employee and bucket to fall towards the ground. He struck the ground which resulted in massive chest trauma.

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#### **47) Employee Electrocuted Trimming Trees**

An employee was in the process of trimming a tree using a pole saw. The tree was located in close proximity to overhead power lines. The employee made contact with a overhead power line and was electrocuted

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#### **48) Fall to Lower Level**

An employee was working from an aerial lift to assist with the removal of a tree branch that had been cut. This employee removed his 3 foot lanyard from his positioning belt, which was attached to the lift bucket, and attached the lanyard to the rope which was holding the tree branch in place. The employee then proceeded to use the controls from the aerial lift bucket to pull the tree branch away from the frame of the truck. The side pulling motion and the weight of the branch pulled the fiberglass bucket from the boom, tipping the operator out of the bucket, and causing him to fall 40 feet to the roof of the truck.

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### ***September 2006***

#### **49) Employee Struck By Tree (NON-FATAL)**

Employee was starting to feed the wood chipper when he was struck by a log being moved by the grapple on another vehicle. The employee was hurt in the back area after being thrown a few feet through the air after impact.

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#### **50) Employee Was Hit By a Piece of Lumber (NON-FATAL)**

An employee was cutting a 20 foot tall tree and had cut out the wedge and was back-cutting the tree. The tree landed and struck the cutout wedge and sent the wedge flying approximately 20 feet and struck another employee in the stomach.

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### **51) 3 Foot Log Dropped on Worker's Head**

A worker in an aerial lift dropped a log on a laborer on the ground.

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### **52) Fall from Tree Fatal**

EE#1 was fatally injured when a tree he was attempting to fell unexpectedly snapped beneath his tie-off point. The employee fell approximately 55' and died at the scene. The victim was identified as a foreman for the tree service and considered a *competent person* by his employer. The victim was a regular full time employee and was part of a 4-man crew that consisted of one other foreman and two ground men.

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### **53) Struck By Falling Tree Limb**

Employees were taking down a large red oak tree in front of a single family residence. A large limb was being cut away from the tree. A tree climber had rigged a web sling from a crane around one of the branches from the limb. The crane operator tightened up the cable to hold the limb while the climber cut it off. When free from the rest of the tree, the top of the limb swung downward, breaking the branch to which the sling was attached. The butt end of the limb fell down along the side of the crane and struck an employee standing next to the crane near the counterweight, hitting him on the right side of his face and fatally injuring him.

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### **54) Fall**

An employer (sole owner) was injured on 9/21/06 when he fell to ground while trimming tree branches above a concrete driveway. The victim died as a result of the injuries suffered from the fall.

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### **55) Fatality**

Victim was struck in the back of the head by a falling tree.

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### **56) Mechanical Equipment Failure Causing Injury (NON-FATAL)**

The injured and his supervisor were trimming a tall tree using an aerial platform with 135 feet boom. Both employees had worn harnesses and their lanyards were tied and secured to the basket of aerial device. Suddenly, the bracing bar supporting the basket at the bottom, buckled (bent). The supervisor in the basket, who was controlling the lift, was not injured. However, his co-worker was thrown onto the mid-rail of the basket's guardrail, struck his knee and fractured it. Ambulance took the injured to the hospital. The injured had some out patient surgery. During investigation and inspection of the machine at the location where the bar bent, it appears the bar had been hit by something. However, what, when and how did it happen, and who did it, could not be established and identified. All employees (electricians and arborists) that used the machine were interviewed. They indicated that they were not aware of anyone hitting anything with the lift that they could remember. During the investigation, it was revealed that the electricians received instruction(s) in the proper use of the machine, but when the arborists borrowed the machine to trim the tree's branches, they had not been instructed in accordance with the manufacturer's operating instructions. It was determined that no accident-related violation was found as a result of this investigation. Division could not establish where, how and who damaged the bar.

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### **57) Contact with High Voltage Power line While Tree Trimming (NON-FATAL)**

An individual (A) was working on the trimming of trees in the back yard of the above mentioned residence. (A) was hired as a day laborer the owner (O), of an unlicensed landscape maintenance company. The residential owner (R), R hired O to trim the trees on his property. (O) dropped (A) and another helper (B) off at the residence to start work and said he would return shortly with gas for the equipment. (A) was provided a fall protection belt and rope by (O) and was using the equipment while climbing a large tree at the back property line of the residence. (A) was utilizing pruning sheers with approximately three foot long aluminum handles and came in contact with the 12KV primary power lines at a height of approximately 33'. (A) was knocked off of his perch by the power jolt and was suspended from the tree by his safety belt and rope at an approximate height of 20 feet as estimated by the fire department. Co-worker (B) heard (A) fall. (B) came to the back yard observed (A) and called 911 for assistance. The fire department rigged a lowering system and extricated (A) from the tree and waited for paramedics. Paramedics found "electrical bilateral hand wounds and a large exit wound on right knee." (A) was transported to the hospital.

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### **58) Fall From Tree**

An employee cutting tree limbs on a tree leaning approximately 30 degrees was fatally injured when the 85 ft. tree fell.

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## **October 2006**

### **59) Suffocated While Cutting Palm Tree Fatal**

A tree trimmer working approximately 70' from the ground was asphyxiated when a canopy of palm fronds collapsed on him. The victim was an experienced tree worker who had climbed the palm tree to remove a large canopy of dead fronds. The victim was equipped with a climbing belt, spikes and a chain saw to cut away the dead vegetation. While the victim was cutting fronds away from the tree, the canopy of dead fronds broke free of the trunk and slid down on top the victim. The victim was trapped beneath the weight of the dead fronds and was asphyxiated.

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### **60) Fell From Tree (NON-FATAL)**

An employee was descending down a tree & had to reposition the climb line. Directly after the reposition, the employee's spurs slipped, and the stub that the climb line was around did not hold. The employee slid/fell down the face of the tree approximately 10'. The employee sustained a fractured forearm.

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### **61) Fall**

Tree climber was killed when he fell off a tree during a tree trimming and removal job. The victim was hoisted to the approximately 75 feet to the top of the tree by a crane by way of its hook. The employee realizing that he forgot his "buck strap" called out to his foreman to lower him so that he can send up the buck strap. The foreman signaled to the crane operator to lower the employee. During the lowering process the victim's harness apparently unhooked from the crane's hook. He fell approximately 60 feet to his death. The employee was not wearing a hard hat and had with him a chain saw. The foreman and another employee watched helplessly as the victim fell to his death.

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### **62) Fall From Tree (NON-FATAL)**

EE#1 suffered a serious injury, when he fall approximately 20 feet from a palm tree, while completing his tree trimming assignment, coming down from 28 feet high tree. The injured employee was working for the company for about a week and performing duties of a tree trimmer/climber. At the time of the

accident, he was performing his daily duties, trimming palm trees. The injured employee was working with/in close proximity to another tree trimming/land service company also onsite. Interviews were conducted of injured employee's supervisor, injured employee, and operations manger.

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### **63) Employee Struck in Head By Log While Unloading**

Robert Burns was struck by a log which was being unloaded from a truck mounted log loader when the log fell from its' grasp, striking employee.

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## ***November 2006***

### **64) Employee Drowned in Pool**

The employer is a gardener. EE#1 was employed by the employer for approximately 5-6 months performing gardening at houses. The employer had worked weekly at this home for the past year. EE#1 had worked at this particular house many times and his duties included removing dried leaves and general clean-up of the back yard. The plants to be worked on were adjacent to the south and west side of the pool and a screen fence of approximately 4 feet in height surrounded the plants and the pool. The south side of the pool extended approximately 2 feet above ground and had a cap of 16"-18" wide. While EE#1 worked from the cap of the pool removing dried & dead plants he fell in the pool and drowned. The employer (also the direct supervisor) was mowing the lawn at the front of the house and states having been in the front yard approximately 7 minutes. Upon returning to the backyard found EE#1 in the bottom of the pool face down. Employer removed EE#1 from the pool and called 911.

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### **65) Fall From Palm Tree**

The employer is primarily engaged in tree trimming and landscaping business. At the time of the accident EE#1 was trimming the fronds around the top of a 70 to 75' tall palm tree. During trimming, he was using a tree worker saddle and a 200' long x 1/2" dia. nylon rope tied-in the overhead tree fronds. After trimming, he was in the process of returning to the ground. As he descended 15 to 20' down the tree, suddenly the rope slipped out of the fronds causing him to fall down on to the dirt ground landing on his back. He sustained fatal bodily injures. EE#1 was taken to hospital for treatment and was pronounced dead upon arrival.

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### **66) Fall From Ladder (NON-FATAL)**

While trimming tree EE#1 fell from ladder

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### **67) Fall**

A tree service employee fell about ten feet from a bucket truck and died from head injuries.

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## ***December 2006***

### **68) An Employee Stated That He Was Struck By A Tree Limb (NON-FATAL)**

An employee was injured in the nose and mouth while working on a tree clearing project. The employee stated he was struck in the head from a tree limb that had been cut from tree trimmer.

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### **69) Struck By Backhoe (NON-FATAL)**

This employer operates a wholesale nursery. EE #1 works for the company as a laborer. EE#1 and other employees were assigned to remove full grown trees from an orchard for replanting. This is not a job normally taken on by the company. It was a one time thing. EE#1 was on the bed of a semi-truck preparing to place a wrapper (tie down) on a tree to hold it in place during transportation. The olive tree was being secured by the boom and bucket of a backhoe. EE#1's lower left leg was pinned between the tree and the bucket of the backhoe when a root broke allowing the tree to roll to its side. EE#1 received a fracture to his left lower leg.

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#### **70) Struck By Limb**

EE#1 was working beneath tree trimming operation responsible for lowering limbs that another employee was cutting from the basket of an aerial lift. The rope he was holding had been routed over a pulley which was suspended from an adjacent tree. When the limb was cut it swung towards him fatally striking him in the head.

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#### **71) Employee Felled With Tree (NON-FATAL)**

Employee (climber) received fractured leg from a fall with a tree. Employee was cutting a tree approximately 30 feet tall and 18-inches in diameter that had fallen onto the eaves of a two-story apartment building. While cutting the branches, the tree broke causing the employee and tree to fall approximately 18-20 feet to the ground. Employee was tied into the trunk of the tree with fall protection.

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#### **72) Finger Tip Amputation (NON-FATAL)**

An employee of a tree service had the left index fingertip amputated when a wood splitter fell on his finger. The tire on the wood splitter was flat and had been taken to a repair shop. In the process of unloading, it slipped and the plate landed on his finger.

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#### **73) Struck**

EE #1 cut a tree down and it became lodged in an adjacent tree approximately 35-40 ft. away. EE #1 then went to the approximately 30-40 ft. oak tree in which the tree was lodged and made a directional cut on the tree. EE #1 then made a back cut on the backside of the tree and he turned to get away and when doing so he slipped and was struck by the tree and slammed backwards to the ground. When EE #1 was slammed to the ground the back of his head struck a rock that was on the ground and the back of his head was cut open and his neck was broken in three places. The tree fell across EE #1's legs and chest and both of his legs were broken and a bone protruded from the side of his leg. The employee lost an excessive amount of blood and he was taken and treated at a nearby hospital and he died 30 days later as a result of a closed head injury with multiple trauma.

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#### **74) Struck By Falling Tree Branch (NON-FATAL)**

The employee (crew foreman of a trimming crew) was directing work activities from ground level when a branch fell and hit him on the head causing trauma and a laceration to his cheek.

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#### **75) An Employee Fell Out of Cargo Area of A Moving Pickup Truck**

An employee was traveling from one farm location to another and was riding in the cargo area of a pickup truck, on top of cargo piled to the top of the bed. As the truck made a left turn, the employee fell out of the cargo area of the pickup truck and struck headfirst onto the pavement below. The employee suffered severe head injuries.

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