

# SAFETY SENSE

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**Editor's note: BE SURE TO PASS EACH ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER ON TO EVERYONE WITH SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES AT YOUR COMPANY.**

## Reduce the Risk of Severe Chain Saw Injuries

### KEY POINTS:

- Medical costs for chain saw injuries in the United States total an estimated \$350 million per year.
- Chain saws are extremely hazardous. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the average chain saw injury requires 110 stitches.
- Severe cuts, amputations, and other chain saw injuries CAN be prevented. Use the Safety SOLUTIONS [Checklist for Safe Practices on Safe Use of Chain Saws](#) to train your workers in English and Spanish.

### Employer's Chain Saw Injury Prevention Checklist

- ✓ Be aware that most chain saw injuries occur when the operator comes into contact with the moving blade.
- ✓ One of the most important steps you can take is to require chain saw operators to wear long pants, chain saw chaps, and other appropriate protective clothing.
- ✓ Never let an employee operate a chain saw unless the person has been fully trained. That training must include the potential hazards of chain saw use.
- ✓ Ensure that any chainsaws you purchase have been approved by the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) or

another nationally recognized testing laboratory.

### Chain Saw Safety Checklist for Employees

- ✓ Know that a chain saw injury can occur very quickly, and can result in the loss of your leg, arm, toes, other body parts — or even the loss of your life.
- ✓ Keep your hands on the handles, and make sure your footing is secure.
- ✓ Dress appropriately. Wear sturdy, high-top boots or shoes with nonslip soles. Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, heavy-duty gloves with a good grip, and chain saw chaps.
- ✓ Use the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes a hard hat, hearing protection, and safety glasses or safety goggles with side shields.
- ✓ Know that one of the biggest hazards of chain saw work is “kickback.” Kickback occurs when the nose or tip of the saw's guide bar comes into contact with a log, branch, or other object. This results in the guide bar abruptly kicking up and back toward the operator.
- ✓ Don't use a chain saw if you are ill or in poor physical condition.
- ✓ Check the area around you to make sure it's clear of bystanders before beginning chain saw work.

# A Good Safety Attitude Will Reduce Injuries

## KEY POINTS:

- Safety must start at the TOP. If you show your employees that you believe in the importance of safety, they will, too.
- Having a good safety attitude means placing as much emphasis on safety as you do on quality and on getting customers' jobs completed on time.
- A good safety attitude also means not taking shortcuts or rushing to get the job done. Use the English/Spanish [Checklist for Safe Practices on Hurrying Can Result in Accidents and Injuries](#) to train your workers.

## Employer's Safety Attitude Dos and Don'ts

### DO —

- Lead by example. Use the PPE you require your employees to use. Follow all of your company's other safety rules.
- Take immediate action on any identified hazards. Show employees by your actions that you do not want them to get injured.
- Use positive reinforcement to instill safe behaviors. Praise — don't blame.

### DON'T —

- Just pay lip service to safety. Your employees will see right through it.
- View safety as an extra cost for your company. Having a safe company will reduce costly injuries and the resulting insurance claims.
- Wait to think about safety until *after* a serious injury or death has occurred.

## Employees' Good Safety Attitude Checklist

- ✓ Take responsibility for your own safety. Don't consider safety someone else's job.
- ✓ Practice safe work habits. Drive defensively, keep all safety guards and shields in place, and use your company's required PPE.
- ✓ Don't become distracted from your task. Don't be in too much of a hurry, take shortcuts, or engage in horseplay. Try to get enough sleep.
- ✓ Think about how your safety affects your family. Who would provide for your family in the future if you were seriously injured or killed?
- ✓ Don't view safety as a part-time job. A disabling injury or fatal accident can occur in a split second. Stay focused on safety all the time.
- ✓ Keep an eye out for hazards. Promptly eliminate them when possible, or immediately report them to your crew leader or other supervisor.

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