

**Loss Control Services: SAFETY TOPIC OF THE MONTH**

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**M.0913: Chainsaw Safety****Facilitator Outline**

**Purpose:** Monterey Educational Risk Management Authority - Loss Control Services provides these monthly topics to promote safety awareness, injury prevention and regulatory compliance for member districts. These topics may be adapted specifically to the needs of your district by editing and reformatting. If desired, the topic may be expanded with video/DVD, Powerpoint, or other media.

**Instructions:** Make copies of the handouts and quiz for those attending. As the facilitator for this training – please keep track of attendance in accordance with your district recordkeeping requirements. Thirty minutes should be allocated to allow for review/discussion of the handouts and the quiz – it is possible to condense the topic time to 15 minutes or less if time constraints are severe. You may use the quiz as a pre or post discussion topic; using it as a pre-quiz and then discussing the answers after review of the materials is a good way to assure an interactive session in a minimal amount of time.

**Answers to Handout #2: Pre-Quiz / Chain Saw Safety**

1. Chain saw injuries tend to be:  
a) severe    b) life threatening    c) innocuous    d) a, b, and c    **e) a and b**    f) none of these
2. It is best to start a chain saw:  
a) on a ladder    b) at shoulder level    **c) on the ground**    d) while kneeling    e) remotely
3. It is a good practice to carry a chainsaw on a waist hook to keep hands free.    True    **False**
4. It is a good practice to refuel on combustible materials to absorb spilled fuel.    True    **False**
5. Protective equipment is required only when working above ground level.    True    **False**
6. It is a good practice to have a first aid kit and fire extinguisher readily available.    **True**    False
7. A chainsaw pre-op should include a check of the:  
a) muffler/exhaust    b) blade condition    c) chain adjustment    d) guards    **e) all should be checked**
8. This lesson covers every aspect of chainsaw safety practices.    True    **False**
9. Good jobsite work practices include:  
a) having a radio or cell phone    b) having a co-worker present    c) start with a job safety plan  
d) avoiding shortcuts to get done quickly    e) none of these are correct    **f) all of these are correct**
10. The most important factor may be the attitude of the chainsaw operator.    **True**    False
11. The “bonus” question adds extra feedback and interactive discussion from the group.

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## **Chain Saw Safety Handout #1 – “The Basics”**

Close to a third of all accidents in the woods involve chain saws, and chain saw injuries tend to be severe, even life-threatening. This lesson will cover only the basics – follow the specific policies and procedures of your employer. With this in mind, pay attention to these tips on handling chain saws safely. If followed carefully, they may protect you from a chainsaw injury.

### **1. Starting and Carrying**

- Always start the saw on the ground, not on your knee or in the air.
- When carrying a saw any distance, carry it by the handle, with the motor stopped and the guide bar to the rear, in such a way that you can throw the saw clear in case you stumble or fall.
- When moving from tree to tree, make sure your finger is not on the saw trigger in case you fall.

### **2. Refueling**

- Shut the motor off and let it cool before refueling.
- Refuel only in a clear area with mineral soil exposed (dirt, rock, sand, etc.- **not** wood, leaves, pine needles, or other combustible materials).
- Take gasoline to and from the job in a safety gas can appropriately labeled. Refuel only with an approved gooseneck gas can, and wipe gasoline spills from the motor.

### **3. Protective Equipment and First Aid**

When operating a chain saw, wear a safety hat, safety shoes, safety pants or chaps, hearing protection, and face shield / safety glasses. Keep a first-aid kit and a fire extinguisher handy. Make sure that all parts are in good condition.

### **4. Here's a chainsaw pre-op checklist:**

- ✓ Is the muffler in good condition ?
- ✓ Does the exhaust blow away from the operator ?
- ✓ Are the spark plugs and wire connections tight ?
- ✓ Is the blade in good condition, not bent or warped?
- ✓ Is the chain sharp and properly adjusted ?
- ✓ If equipped with an automatic oiler, is there sufficient oil in the tank ?
- ✓ Is there a guard, in place and functioning properly ?
- ✓ Are all bolts, nuts, and screws tight ?

a) Perhaps the most important factors of all are the knowledge and safety orientation of the operator. A chain saw is nothing to fool around with, so you had better familiarize yourself thoroughly with the manufacturer's information on parts, safe operation, and troubleshooting. Your employer may provide more specific training at their discretion.

b) Start the job with a safety plan and take time to make work activity adjustments as needed. Follow specific employer requirements that may prohibit working alone, may require having a cell phone or radio for communication or other chainsaw safety procedures.

c) Have all of the appropriate personal protective equipment, in good condition, and wear it. Never persuade yourself that "this is just a little job, so I don't need to waste time on suiting up and going through all those checks." If something goes wrong, which can happen very quickly, you could be "wasting" a lot more time in the hospital.

## Handout #2: QUIZ - Chain Saw Safety

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Please provide the best answer for each question – the “best” answer may be open to discussion during review of the quiz!

- Chain saw injuries tend to be:  
a) severe   b) life threatening   c) innocuous   d) a, b, and c   e) a and b   f) none of these
- It is best to start a chain saw:  
a) on a ladder   b) at shoulder level   c) on the ground   d) while kneeling   e) remotely
- It is a good practice to carry a chainsaw on a waist hook to keep hands free.   True   False
- It is a good practice to refuel on combustible materials to absorb spilled fuel.   True   False
- Protective equipment is required only when working above ground level.   True   False
- It is a good practice to have a first aid kit and fire extinguisher readily available.   True   False
- A chainsaw pre-op should include a check of the:  
a) muffler/exhaust   b) blade condition   c) chain adjustment   d) guards   e) all should be checked
- This lesson covers every aspect of chainsaw safety practices.   True   False
- Good jobsite work practices include:  
a) having a radio or cell phone   b) having a co-worker present   c) start with a job safety plan  
d) avoiding shortcuts to get done quickly   e) none of these are correct   f) all of these are correct
- The most important safety factor may be the attitude of the chainsaw operator.   True   False
- Bonus Question: Do you have something to add to the discussion regarding your experience with situations involving working with a chain saw?

