



# MAFES Dawg Tracks

February 18, 2013



Safety Tips:  
Chain Saw



## Do You Know that?

- According to the U.S. Consumer Safety Commission, there were over 28,500 chain saw injuries in 1999. Over 36% of these were to the legs and knees.
- The average chain saw injury requires 110 stitches, and in 2000, the estimated costs were over \$12,000.00 per case.
- The medical costs for chain saw injuries, based on current facts per year, is said to be an estimated \$350 million dollars per year.
- Workman's Compensation, based on the assumption of 4-week recovery period, amounts to \$125 million dollars per year.
- Accident location in 1999, based on 28,543 total reported injuries were:
  - ~Head area – 2,685
  - ~Upper body – 2,453
  - ~Hand area – 10,200
  - ~Upper & lower leg, knee – 10,310
  - ~Foot area – 1,872

Please note, based on the above facts, one can readily tell that chain saws are extremely dangerous. But with the proper training, the proper personal protective equipment and remaining focused on the "business at hand," one can perform chain saw work with little trouble. The following tips will help you to operate a chain saw and enhance your safety - if you heed these tips:

## BEFORE STARTING A CHAIN SAW-

- ✓ Read the manufacturer's instruction manual closely and get totally familiar with its contents.
- ✓ Check controls, chain tension, and all the bolts and handles to ensure that they are working properly and that they are adjusted according to the instruction manual.
- ✓ Make sure that the chain is always sharp and the lubrication reservoir is full.
- ✓ Start the saw on the ground or another firm support. Do not ever drop start the saw.
- ✓ Start the saw at least 10 feet from the spot where you filled the fuel tank. Engage the brake when starting the saw.

## FUELING A SAW-

- Use only a laboratory approved container for transporting the fuel.
- Fill the fuel tank at least 10 feet away from ignition sources and move the saw to another location to start it.
- Always practice - **NO SMOKING** - while filling the tank.

- Use a funnel or flexible hose to fill the fuel tank.
- Do not attempt to re-fuel a "hot" saw or a running saw.

## CHAIN SAW SAFETY-

- ✓ Clear away dirt, debris, small tree limbs and rocks from the saw's chain path. Look for nails, spikes or other metal in the tree before cutting.
- ✓ Shut off the saw or engage its chain brake when carrying the saw on rough or uneven terrain.
- ✓ Keep your hands on the saw's handles and maintain secure footing while operating the saw.
- ✓ Proper personal protective equipment must be worn when operating the saw, which includes hands, feet, legs, eyes, hearing and head protection.
- ✓ Do not wear loose fitting clothes.
- ✓ Be careful that the trunk or tree limbs won't bind against the saw.
- ✓ Watch for branches under tension. They can spring out as they are cut.
- ✓ Gasoline-powered chain saws must be equipped with a protective device that minimizes chain saw kickback.
- ✓ Be cautious of saw kick-back. To avoid kick-back, do not cut with the tip of the saw. If equipped with one, keep the tip guard in place.
- ✓ Always avoid making cuts with the saw between your legs. Always cut with the saw to the outside of your legs.
- ✓ Don't stand on a log and cut between your feet.
- ✓ Always stand to one side of the limb you are to cut - never straddle it.
- ✓ Always keep in mind where the chain will go if it breaks; never position yourself or other people in line with the chain.
- ✓ Keep the chain out of the dirt - debris will fly, the teeth will be dulled and the life of the chain will be shortened.

## TRANSPORTING AND STORING THE SAW-

- ✓ Always carry the saw in a level position; tipping will cause spillage creating a potential fire hazard.
- ✓ Refrain from carrying the saw in the passenger side of a vehicle; it is dangerous for it to be flying around in the vehicle.
- ✓ Always try to transport the saw in a case, if available. If not, try to keep the bar in a chain guard.
- ✓ When storing the saw, drain the fuel into an approved container and store the fuel in a cool, well-ventilated area. Either spray oil or WD-40 on the chain for end of the season protection.
- ✓ Store the saw in an area away out of the reach and the temptation of children.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.  
MAFES MSU-ES (662) 566-2201  
Excerpts: [www.ehvx.com/facts](http://www.ehvx.com/facts)  
[www.osha.gov/publications](http://www.osha.gov/publications)  
[www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/agen/safety](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/agen/safety)  
11/13/2012

**DON'T LEARN SAFETY BY  
ACCIDENT  
SAFETY RULES ARE THE BEST TOOLS!!**