

Safety First...it's the right thing to do!



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Use the Right Tool

A crew was preparing to excavate along a city street and install new communication lines. Before any excavation could take place, the area had to be cleared and several trees and bushes needed to be removed. The crew did not have a proper saw to cut down the trees, so they decided to use a chop saw with a table saw blade that was available in their job trailer.

Two crew members successfully cut down a 4 ½" diameter tree and immediately proceeded to a 9" diameter tree. As crew member 1 made the cut, crew member 2 was pushing on the trunk to keep the blade from binding. The saw kicked back, striking worker 2 in the left thigh. He was transported to the hospital for treatment.

Review of the incident found the following:

- Used the wrong tool for the task.
- Tool set up and used improperly.
- Did not use the proper PPE for the task.
- Worker 2 placed himself in the line of fire.
- A chainsaw was the proper tool for this task.

Tree felling, like all construction activities, requires special knowledge and skill. Do not attempt any task without training. Make sure to ask questions so you clearly understand your task assignment. If you feel something is unsafe, DON'T DO IT.

Remember, Ref-Chem and your family are counting on you!

OSHA Guidelines:

- Perform a hazard assessment.
- Operators of chain saws and other equipment should be trained.
- Use personal protective equipment as recommended by the equipment manufacturer.
- Determine the proper amount of hinge wood to safely guide the tree's fall. Provide a retreat path to a safe location.
- Determine the tree's felling direction. Address forward lean, back lean, and/or side lean issues.
- Never turn your back on a falling tree.
- Be alert and avoid objects thrown back by a tree as it falls.
- OSHA has specific regulatory requirements for clearing & grubbing.

