Idaho Logging Safety News

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WELL, ALMOST EVERYONE STAYED AWAKE AT THIS YEARS SAFETY CLASSES!

When I asked ***Cece Hirschi*** about her daughter, she said ***Cade*** was a "*logger in training*"!

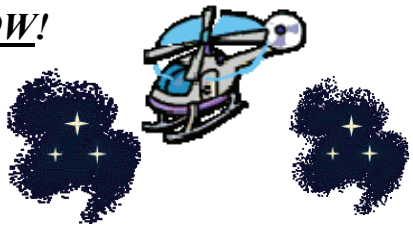
Cade is beautiful, brilliant and knows the value of a good nap. OBVIOUSLY she has what it takes to become a Log Loader Operator!

A BIG THANK YOU TO WESTERN TRAILER, WESTERN STATES EQUIPMENT and LES SCHWAB TIRE *for supporting our Loggers Survival Safety Classes with some delicious breakfast treats. Keeping those lumberjacks in a good mood is the key!*

Chris Cay and Chris Stephens work out of Lewiston. I guess just about everything that comes out of Western States starts with a C!

Debra Alm, Ken Conner and Danya Daniels are part of Schwab's Grangeville crew. This store (like the others) have gone "Out of Their Way" in supporting loggers for a lot of years!

WE NEED A HELICOPTER LANDING ZONE NOW!
(and the landing has a foot of dust on it)



By Monte Biggers

Every year we have training on emergency rescue. Having this training allows the loggers here in Idaho to call and request a helicopter in an emergency situation at their discretion. This is a great tool for us to use and can greatly reduce the amount of time it takes to get an accident victim to medical services.

We all know the importance of identifying and preparing landing zones, having a plan with written co-ordinates and having a way to communicate with State Comm. Usually everyone does a great job and is prepared to act quickly if an accident happens. However, while talking to a logger recently about the landing zones he had identified, we saw a potential problem.

On this particular job, areas large enough for a helicopter to land were rare and had all been previously used to deck in or had been skidded through. As the weather warmed up all of the sites had become dust bowls. There was no way a helicopter could land in them nor was there anywhere else on the job suitable. I suppose a water truck could be brought in to wet down whichever landing zone was needed, but how much time would that take?

Several new rescue helicopter staging areas have been added in Idaho in the last few years, greatly cutting down the amount of time needed for them to arrive on the job. Potentially, the helicopter could be hovering and looking for a place to land before the logger could have a landing zone ready. This puts more importance on being prepared!

We are always stressing to have your landing zones as close to the work area as possible, but it might pay to have alternatives ready just in case. I have found that most landowners or land management agencies are willing to work with loggers in this regard. If you can find a suitable point, meadow or clearing of some sort as close as possible to your jobsite, even if its on a different owners or agencies land, often they will allow you to use it as a landing zone. You must be sure the area is free of snags or other obstacles of course. If not, obtain permission to prepare it ahead of time. Having an alternative landing zone in an area that is not being logged could save enough time to make a big difference in the outcome of a rescue situation.

$873.09

I happened to run into John's sister when I deposited this in the credit union. When she was made aware of what I was up to and where the money came from, she looked up through tear filled eyes and said, "Loggers are just Unbelievable People. Tell them ALL thanks".

Keep on Truckin Johnny G!

LOGGING AND ELECTRICITY SOMETIMES DON'T MIX

By Terry Streeter

In our spring Safety Classes, which you all attended, we talked about electrical injuries. I have already had several questions about this from the crews this spring, so I'll tell you what the experts told me.

Electricity is Deadly. It always has been and nothing has changed; it will kill you!

The professionals say they are still surprised with it and are still learning the "magic" of what electricity can do. So who are we to fool with it or try to out guess it? They suggest people have become more lax and don't respect it, and that's when problems arise.

Here are some facts and thought on ELECTRICITY:

The only one who can tell you the power is off is the POWER COMPANY. NO ONE ELSE, NO ONE!

Having a tree hung up in a line, one pinned to the ground or a machine boom into a line is a bad situation. But thinking the power will shut off after the BREAKERS have flipped a few times is a mistake. Only an engineer would know the load and voltage on the line and how the breaker would behave. It is foolish and deadly to try to out guess it.

Some think (and so did I) that you can fall a tree close to a power line and just brush it, and you would be safe. Electricity travels at 186ooo miles per second, which is the speed of light, so for that whole couple of seconds the tree is brushing by the line you could be electrocuted.

Remember, you don't have to touch a power line to be zapped. Electricity can arc out under certain conditions. Hi-Lead booms, cables or maybe a loader working too close, or under power lines, could make a line arc. A truck driver was killed when he was to close to a power line and threw his wrappers. When the cable went by the line, not hitting it but close enough to arc, he was electrocuted.

Even the carbon particles in smoke or dust could cause a power line to arc down, so keep your distance.

Make sure your crews are aware of POWER LINES on your logging jobs. Maybe hang ribbons or put up signs. They don't have to be fancy, just something with POWER LINE OVERHEAD and maybe an arrow pointing up. It could save somebody's life.

*A wrapper being thrown went over a power line and **instantly** ignited this load of logs.*

Luckily, the driver escaped injury in this case.

STILL LOOKING FOR THAT PERFECT EYE PROTECTION

It is no secret that getting eye protection on the sawyers is probably the industries biggest challenge, at least as far as personal protective equipment goes.

Fallers have to be on their toes every second, watching for the next thing to come flying their way. Trying to see out of scratched up, sweat covered safety glasses or a safety screen while looking into the sun may somewhat limit their vision (***DUH!)***

BUT, fallers also know running a saw without eye protection will eventually lead to eye injuries, so they keep looking.

Sean Hammond, a very experienced sawyer, thinks he came up with some eye protection that works, at least for him. After trying different types, Sean says the screened safety glasses (in the photo) allows him to see well enough to do his job safely while hopefully protecting him from injury.

The safety goggles are Sean's but the fellow he saws for, Jack Wade, says he makes them look GOOD!
Having professional loggers like Sean and Jack make that extra effort toward safety is greatly appreciated.

Talking (and working) with sawyers over the years, I have known several that have started wearing eye protection *after* they have had an eye injury. With the *20-20 hindsight* (which we all have) they of course wished they had started using it before.

Many of the most experienced sawyers in the state use the eye protection. If someone that has been falling trees for the last forty years can get used to it, I think someone just starting out can to. I encourage you to keep trying to find the eye protection that works for you.

CHECKING ON THE CREW

By Monte Biggers

When you have guys spread out all over the mountainside there needs to be a way of checking on them. Usually this means the fallers but could be processor operators, feller bunchers or even bosses out for a stroll in the woods looking for a shady place to nap.

If you have people isolated from the rest of the crew there has to be a means for them to check in on a regular schedule. You need to have someone designated to either make regular rounds or to answer radio calls to insure everything is O.K. Whistles can work for fallers if they have a partner or are working within earshot of the rest of the crew, otherwise handheld radios will probably be your best bet.

However you do it, it needs to be done! We don't want someone lying out there hurt wondering when help will arrive.

SIGNS, SIGNS, SIGNS, PUT UP THE SIGNS!

By Terry Streeter

Signs are the one tool you can use to warn "Joe Public" that there is logging activity around and that they need to be alert and careful. You are required as contractors to have signs in place at all times while working and hauling.

You cannot count on the public hearing the machines, saws or even seeing the dust you make to keep them safe. They will drive up the road sightseeing, looking for berries, gathering firewood, hunting or whatever, and not be aware of the danger unless you tell them with a sign.

When you put up the signs take the time to do it right and use good ones. Put them in plain site and keep them in good condition. Put them at the beginning of the woods road and if the job can be accessed from the other end, put signs there too. Maybe one on the county road farther out might not be a bad idea, along with marking Helicopter Pads and where cell phones get out in case of an emergency.

Sometimes we need to make a better effort getting them up. On one job I visited the LOG TRUCK sign was laying on the cut bank and that won't work. On a another job the two LOG TRUCK signs had been torn in half for some time and only half of the sign was there. On still another job the LOG TRUCK sign was upside down!

Signs are expensive and they are getting stolen (even in broad daylight) but I suggest you cannot afford to be without them, even for half a day. When the signs are up, you are at least somewhat covered in case of an accident.

I've been asked what to do about signs getting stolen. I don't know what to tell you except we used to put some Link Belt gear grease around the edges and after that, nobody seemed to want to take them. To tell you the truth, we didn't take them either when we were done with the job. I remember they were still there 5 months after that, and maybe they still are!

YEP, IT IS REALLY OBVIOUS AIN'T IT…..

NO CHAPS
NO EYE PROTECTION
NO HARD HAT

WHAT IS THIS GUY THINKIN!

SNAKES, BUGS AND HEAT….OH, THE JOYS OF SUMMERTIME LOGGING!

By Monte Biggers

I was recently on a job in my area where the crew came from up north and hadn't had the pleasure of logging in Southern Idaho before. It was early May and only about 100 degrees out and they were in an area known for rattlesnakes. When I was talking to one of the sawyers that was falling trees on a near vertical hillside in what he described as a " snaky" looking area, he pointed out something to me that I thought I might pass on.

It seems he was paying attention to the part of the first aid class where I say if a person gets bit on the hand by a rattlesnake its their own fault. He pointed out that it was steep enough that he often needed to rest his hand on the hillside for balance, so if a snake bit him on the hand it wouldn't be his fault! I agreed and told him that I would make an exception if he did get bit. I also reminded him if a snake did get him to remain calm and that standing on a cliff with a 2500 foot straight drop was nowhere to panic. I don't know if I was much help or not.

The ticks were also out so remember if you are in an area known for them bugs, check yourself over at the end of the day and rid yourself of them before they have a chance to burrow in. Ticks have a hard body so you can feel them easily.

It looks to be a dry hot spring and summer, at least down south, so this means the bees are coming out and are angry. Make sure to tell everyone if you have a sting kit and where you keep it. It's also not a bad idea to throw some sort of an antihistamine in the first aid kit.

Let's also keep an eye on each other and watch for signs of heat exhaustion. Remember that heat exhaustion not only can lead to heat stroke but can cause errors in judgment that can lead to other accidents. Just remember to drink lots of fluids and keep an eye on each other.

In the spring, maybe we ought to get paid by the number of meetings attended, instead of by the ton!

Safety meetings, conferences, business meeti….as a logger succinctly put it, "I AM MEETINGED OUT"! Some were well worth it though, like the example to the left.

Bill Mulligan, operations manager for ***Blue North Forest Products,*** brought in logging contractors to go over log quality, log yard safety and what he thought the future might hold for the loggers.

Foresters / Log Purchasers *Doug Nelson* *and* ***Dan Smith*** discussed the product they were looking for and safety issues out in the woods.

Meetings like this always seem to solve problems *before* they become problems. Good Job ***Blue North!***

HOW TO USE A LUMBER RACK!

"Someone" made a good notch and a safe back cut (2" above the notch) to prevent kickback. At the critical moment, the Lodge pole Pine went "*POP*" and snapped off at a 90 degree angle to the cut and fell on the truck. No one was injured. Lesson learned: ALWAYS keep trucks a safe distance away from falling operations, no matter how easy the job looks.

Signed, Jack Pine.

(*Thanks for the email "Jack P.", I am sure none of your friends will recognize your pickup!)*

IF THE EXPERIENCED LOGGERS CAN WEAR THEIR HARD HATS…..

By Galen Hamilton

I stopped to visit with ***Allen Paul*** the other day when he was waiting for the road to get cleaned out so he could get back to the loader. I asked him when he wore his hard hat and he responded, "All the time, I don't like getting monkey bumps on my nog"!

We are really pushing for truck drivers to put on their hard hats when they get out of the truck, not just in the mill yard, but in the woods and when they stop to tighten wrappers. Not because it is the law, company policy or the boss pulled up in the pickup, but because ***IT CAN SAVE YOUR STUBBORN LIFE!***

*Not only is **Allen Paul** a respected trucker and a good guy, but he is also a "trend setter". When I asked young lumberjack **Cody Marek** to get in the picture with Allen, he told me he had to grab his hard hat first!*

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