

# Idaho Logging Safety News

Volume 27 Number 2  
June 2016



Published quarterly in the interest of logging safety by the  
Division of Building Safety, Logging Safety Bureau

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## ***ANOTHER YEAR OF SAFETY CLASSES UNDER YOUR HARD HAT!!***

I just wanted to take a minute and thank all the logging companies and their crews for putting up with us safety guys for another year. We understand the training can be repetitious (and we hope you will never need to use it) but when life throws us a curve ball, perhaps that training will pay off.

I would also like to thank **LES SCHWAB TIRE, WESTERN STATES EQUIPMENT, and WESTERN TRAILER** for the doughnuts at the classes. A doughnut or two and a cup of coffee seems to put those lumberjacks in a heck of a lot better mood!

I would also like to thank some folks from Idaho's State EMS Communication Center, which we know as **STATE COMM**. That agency's manager, **Michele Carreras** and communication supervisor, **Jeremy Elliott**, took the time out of their busy schedules to attend the safety classes and explain what the Communication Center does, which as one lumberjack stated, "*Hey, they cover a bunch of freakin stuff!!!*"



At the Grangeville class **Carl Stromberg** and **Kim Helmick** asked **Michele Carreras** if she might send the helicopter up to their jobs to fly out an "injured" animal around Elk season. Michele said she would work on it!



Logging Contractors **Mark Mahon** and **Bill Gladhart** corral State Comm workers **Jill Berg, Jeremy Elliot, Shandy Armbruster** and **Kelley Rawlings** in McCall. They remembered Mark calling in a few years ago when he used a few "adjectives" while still keying the mike. They laughed and reported.... "We've heard worse"!

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**In this issue:** Loggers face issues on Fires, Emergency Rescues, where to park the darn crummy and much more.

## ***IT WILL BE HOT AND DRY BEFORE WE KNOW IT!***

*(This article is from the FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION INC. and passed along to us. Good info to be reminded about)*

Debris accumulation is the top cause of forestry equipment fires, he points out. But it's not the only one. Here are the top five causes of logging equipment fires and what operators should know—and do—to avoid them:

### **1) Debris in the Engine Compartments**

Dry leaves, needles, branches, sawdust, and twigs can build up on equipment, particularly in the engine compartment. This debris is highly combustible and must be removed frequently. Cleaning out debris once a day or before a shift may not be enough. Get in the habit of checking for debris buildup at lunch breaks, coffee breaks, and whenever time allows.

### **2) Hotter-Running Tier 4 Engines**

New Tier 4 engines run hotter than the earlier ones did. Be aware of higher engine temperatures, and take care to prevent debris build-up

### **3) Debris Ignited by Rotating Components**

Like a camper rubbing two sticks together, rotating components such as drive shafts can rub on debris caught against these moving parts until it ignites. Remove such debris frequently to prevent fires on or around these areas.



*Fig. 2: Clear combustible debris in forestry equipment as it accumulates, even several times a day.*

Proper bonding and grounding of the complete fuel delivery system is important during refueling. A simple wire connection between two machines will create a bonding connection. Fuel systems need an electrical path between the tank and the ground, to dissipate static electricity and minimize the potential of creating a spark.

If you have any questions about proper fuel system bonding and grounding, consult with your fuel system supplier before refueling. Review the Association of Equipment Manufacturers' *Best Practices* bulletin on the topic at [www.aem.org/ulsd/](http://www.aem.org/ulsd/)

### **4) Altered Electrical Systems**

Unauthorized and inadequate modifications to electrical systems frequently lead to shorts, overloading, and fires. Never add unauthorized electrical components to machines. Only use power outlets provided by the manufacturer.

### **5) Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Ignition Hazard**

Loggers need to be aware of the risks associated with Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) during refueling. ULSD poses a greater static ignition hazard than do earlier diesel formulations with a higher sulfur content.

Static charges can build up in diesel fuel delivery systems, such that a small spark can ignite the combustible vapors and result in a fire or explosion.



*Blocked radiator can cause overheating, leading to fire.*

**CONCLUSION:** Safety is everyone's job. Hazard awareness and reduction to help prevent equipment fires keeps everyone working, minimizes injuries and property losses while optimizing working conditions for all.

## ***OSHA RULES ON LINE SKIDDING***

***By Stan Leach***

We have learned a lot from our interactions with OSHA this past operating season and I would like to pass on this information to you. The rules that they are enforcing can be found at the Oregon OSHA website [www.orosha.org/pdf/pubs/1935PDF](http://www.orosha.org/pdf/pubs/1935PDF).

Under these rules, it clearly states that wedge buttons are not allowed on the guylines or the skyline of a line machine. Pull tests done on wedge buttons show that they will fail at 60% of the breaking strength of the line. Pressed on buttons are not allowed either; pull tests on them show they will fail at 75% of the breaking strength of the line.



Eyes either spliced or clamped are the only allowable ends for guylines and skylines. You are still allowed to use a wedge button on the skidding line that connects to the chokers. If you are changing over from buttons to the eyes do not use the screw in type shackles. These do not have enough surface area at the point they make contact with the line and have a tendency to wear on the line at that point. If you use the knock-out shackles, they have enough surface area at the point of line contact to not wear on the line. Always remember to put the shackle pin through the eye or dead end of the line.

Cable manufactures recommend that the working load of cable should be about 1/3 of the breaking strength of that line, giving you a 3 to 1 safety factor. Consistently overloading your cable leads to premature failure of the line. Cable is designed to stretch and retract as it is used, but if you overload it, it will stretch too far and stay that way, making it more brittle and weaker than before.

Without a lot of experience, it is hard to tell how much of a load you are putting on your line. There are some skyline tension monitoring systems out there that can give you accurate readings of the loads you are working with. Yes, I know they cost money, but cable is not cheap anymore either. Imagine if you could extend the life of that skyline by 30 to 50%. How much would that lower your cable costs? How much does it cost you to be down when you break the skyline and have to stop to splice it? What does it cost if the skyline breaks, dropping the carriage onto some rocks or a big stump?

Only you know your true operating costs and only you can decide if something will work for your company. This is just a little food for thought, so break out the calculator and see if it will work for you.

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## ***ONE LAST CHANCE FOR FIRE FIGHTING TRAINING!!!***

I recently received a memo from the *Clearwater Potlatch Timber Protective Agency's* Chief Fire Warden, Len Young, announcing they were offering a *Fire Fighting "Refresher"* class for loggers. This training allows loggers to work on *Private and State Land* when fires break out.

Yes, logging will be going full bore at that time, but if getting a chance to get a dozer, feller buncher, or timber faller some work later this summer interests you, this is your opportunity.

The class will be held **JUNE 13TH** in **Orofino**. For time and location please contact the *CPTPA* at 208-476-5612.

### ***SPEAKING OF FIRES, LOGGERS, and "WHAT ELSE CAN GO WRONG" STORIES!***

*By Stan Leach*

The picture shows the aftermath of a chainsaw accident. The logger operating this saw has over thirty years experience in the woods. He had never had this happen before and wanted to have me pass it on to all of you, so that you can be aware of what can happen.

He had just used up a tank of gas on a hot summer day. When he filled up, he spilled a very small amount, as we all do when sawing. The saw had run clear out, so he put the choke on to get it going. One pull and it coughed like it was trying to start, so he took the choke off. Five more pulls failed to get it going, but the sixth **REALLY** got it going!



***This is ONE HOT SAW!!!!***

On the sixth pull the saw erupted in a ball of flames that engulfed the sawyer's lower body. His chaps saved the front part of his legs, but the straps that attach them melted through his pants into his skin, causing second and third degree burns. He called for help on the radio and was rushed to town. After three months off getting healed up, he was back to work.

I went to the saw shop to see if we could definitively establish what caused the fire, but the saw was melted to the point that it was impossible to prove. The gas cap did not come loose or fall out prior to the fire. The mechanic said there are a couple spots on a saw that if you had a loose or broken wire it could have caused a spark, or it could have been a backfire in the carburetor. We'll never know for sure.

This accident points out the need to check out our saws from time to time. They are easy to take for granted, especially now that they are not used as much, since a lot of the sawing is done by machines. If you think about it, we have several ounces of gas and an ignition source in our hands when we are sawing. In the army I believe they call that a *Molotov Cocktail*....a small bomb that explodes if those two things come together!

We don't know for sure what happened, but this experienced logger wanted all of you to know that it can happen, and to keep it in mind when fueling up.

## ***TURNOUTS AND WIDE SPOTS (where did they go???)***

*By Terry Streeter*

Whatever happened to *tunouts* or what you may call *J holes*? I see jobs where the pickups are parked a 1/4 to a 1/2 a mile away from the crew. Yes, they have backed in and dropped off their gear and first-aid supplies, but that's still too far away in case of an emergency. The few wide spots there are, are so tight that the rigs are parked on the edge of the outside bank and are barely long enough to fit maybe two pickups in. If the empty truck is there, it is another 1/2 mile back out the road to the next one.

So, I think we have two problems here. Number 1, it is a matter of safety that you want a vehicle as close as possible to the work area. Your safety standards say: *Suitable means of transportation shall be established and maintained at the site of all operations to be used in the event any employee is seriously injured.* Number 2, we need the wide spots to be wide enough to safely get the rigs out of the way. Your safety standards say: *Sufficient turnouts shall be provided and a safety side clearance maintained along all truck roads*".

Plus if you have to have a *FIRE PUMPER* on the job, and I am sure you do, you need room for it as close to the logging activity as possible.

I have talked with several land managers and owners and they said they do not have a problem with you fixing turnouts or adding more, but we need to use common sense. You have to understand they are probably not going to agree to cutting out a 90 degree slope or dozing next to the creek, but I think they will work with you to find a solution.

So, the bottom line is if you need to do some dozing to make room to park your rigs, talk it over with your sale administrator when you start your next job. It will give you something to do in all your spare time!

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## ***KEEPING AN EYE OUT FOR YOUR FRIENDS***

*It has always amazed me how the loggers here in Idaho growl and glare at one another, but when something goes a little hay wire, they come together tighter than any family you have ever seen. This spring I heard a few stories where loggers used their knowledge and common sense to basically save the day!*

*A couple of these stories involved folks experiencing strokes. We are finding out strokes don't really care whether you're a man or woman, old or young, or even if you're in good shape. Just remember, if we can spot those symptoms and get someone to the doc in a hurry, it can lessen the damage immensely.*

*So lets keep an eye out for that logging family....even though the goof balls got a better strip than you!!!*



*Steps to Recognize a Stroke....**FAST***

***F...face drooping***  
***A...arm weakness***  
***S...speech difficulty***  
***T...time to call 911***



## ***LOGGING ACCIDENT....(a BAD NEWS-GOOD NEWS story)***

**Bad News:** An experienced timber faller was very seriously injured when he was struck by a large limb *that came out of nowhere*. The tree he was falling went exactly where he wanted it and he had moved away from the stump a safe distance, all the time keeping an eye on the falling tree. The faller did everything right!

**Good News:** The company this logger works for had their ***EMERGENCY RESCUE PLAN*** in place and knew how to use it! After the call to State Comm., the helicopter was on the job so quick that their medical people were able to help the crew get the injured logger up to the road and into the helicopter. From the time of the accident to the time the helicopter was landing at the hospital...*about 1 hour. AMAZING!*

The faller faces a long and apparently painful *road* to recovery, but because this company had their stuff together (and because this logger is tougher than nails!) he is on that ROAD!




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## ***SINCE WE ARE TALKING ABOUT EMERGENCY RESCUE PLANS.....***

At the safety classes, one question was given to the ***State Communication*** people at just about every location, “*Can we pre-register with State Comm?*” The answer we received was YES, and here is how.

***\*Call or E-mail State Comm. 208-846-7610 or 1-800-632-8000 or [elliottj@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:elliottj@dhw.idaho.gov)***

***\*Give them Company Name, Job Name, Longitude and Latitude, County and Nearest Community***

***\*Give them Contact Numbers (office, home or your cell)***

***\*State Comm will reply to check information.***

***\*If you have more than one job going, make sure information goes with that job.***

***\*When you move jobs **MAKE SURE YOU UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION WITH STATE COMM!*****

***\*This privilege is for **Logging Companies ONLY.*****

***Pre-registering*** may or may not work for your company, that is your choice. Just remember, using state Comm is a privilege. No other industry can do what the logging industry is allowed to do, so lets not mess it up, Galen.

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***A message to all the supervisors, bosses and owners....  
YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE WATCHING YOU!***

*By Stan Leach*

The crew listens to what you say, but they put more stock in what you do. They will listen to you at the safety meetings describing safe working procedures, but if they see you not following those procedures, that safety meeting just became a waste of air.

Sometimes the pressure you guys are under to produce more logs leads to the temptation to cut a few corners in an attempt to speed things up. You may get away with it a time or two, but eventually it will catch up, many times resulting in someone getting hurt. The costs of that accident will eclipse the meager gains from cutting corners.

The average cost of a “slip-fall” - “sprain-strain” type injury is over twenty thousand dollars. This is a somewhat hidden cost. What I mean by that is it won’t come as a bill at the end of the month. It will show up as an increase in your workmen’s comp rates or the failure for your work comp rates to go down like they would have without the accident. If there was twenty thousand dollars in your hand, would you throw it away so you could pick up a twenty?

We all make decisions throughout the work day about how to do our jobs. If you have been logging very long, you are well aware of the risks that come with each decision. If your wife or daughter was doing your job’ how would you tell them to handle the decision knowing the risks? As employees we need to make the right choices, and as a boss or supervisor, we need to lead by example. We need to make it clear what our expectations are and deal with it if we see an employee not following them. We need to show that we take all the safety stuff seriously and that we are willing to invest our time and money to prove it. If you do, it will **NOT** go unnoticed because ***your employees are watching!***




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***ONE LAST THING ON EMERGENCY RESCUES***

*A logging company that is VERY efficient when it comes to having their emergency information up to snuff recently had an accident on their job. They did everything perfectly, but when the helicopter showed up, it would not land at their designated landing zone.*

*Over the years this has happened a few times. Apparently the helicopter pilot notices a “concern” that we have overlooked while picking out that area. For that reason, I suggest you have a couple of extra landing zones in mind with those coordinates written down also.*

*Remember, the landing zone should be at least 100’ x 100’. If the trees surrounding that area are tall, you might need more room. It is hard for the helicopter to go straight down and then straight back up. Since it has rained for the last several months I know it is hard to imagine, but the dust will show up someday! If the trucks have been using the landing zone as a turn around for a couple of weeks, the dust might make it impossible for the ship to land.*

*You loggers are doing a great job and we keep learning how to do it even better....THANK YOU!*

Idaho Logging Safety News  
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## *The Idaho Logging Safety News*

Is published quarterly by the Logging Safety Bureau

It is mailed to all logging companies in Idaho.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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Idaho Logging Safety News, Logging Safety Bureau,  
[dbs.idaho.gov](http://dbs.idaho.gov)

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