Idaho Logging Safety News

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The following article discusses suggested changes to the Idaho Minimum Safety Standards and Practices for Logging and changes to the State Logging Safety Program. It was recently printed in the ASSOCIATED LOGGING CONTRACTORS newsletter written by their Executive Director, Shawn Keough. We thought it would be a good idea to pass it along in our newsletter.

IDAHO LOGGING SAFETY PROGRAM RULES GET UPDATED

By Shawn Keough, ALC Executive Director

The Idaho State Logging Safety Program, as it exists today has been in place since the late 1980s. Logging Safety rules were first established by the state in 1952. The state has the authority to perform safety inspections, shut down unsafe operations and provide training programs for logging operations in Idaho. The ALC helped to put the current program in place in about 1987 and has been and continues to be a partner in the spring logging safety classes that are held across the state each year. The ALC safety staff also work closely with the state logging safety personnel throughout the year.

Over the years the program has been housed in different state agencies. The Division of Building Safety has been operating the program under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the State Industrial Commission for about 20 years. In 2014 a decision was made to stop utilizing an MOA and simply and formally place the program at the Div. of Building Safety as they'd been running it for all those years with the Industrial Commission as sort of a middle-man. The Legislature agreed with this and passed S 1001 in the 2015 legislative session to accomplish this. The legislation can be found on the internet at this address: https://legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2015/S1001.htm

Whenever a law like S 1001 is passed, state agencies write rules to implement the law. As there are already rules in place to implement the State Logging Safety Program what needs to occur is to move those rules from under the Industrial Commission and into the Division of Building Safety. It is a bit of a bureaucratic shuffle but it does need to happen to keep everything clear.

Beginning in the spring of 2015 the ALC staff and a sub-committee of ALC members has met and worked with the Idaho State Logging Safety personnel and the Administrator of the Division of Building Safety and his staff members on the process of moving the rules and on suggested updates. We met in a formal 'negotiated rule' session in December of 2015 and have continued to communicate back and forth through out this year.

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Rules Get Updated continued:

We used this opportunity to update the rules in places that needed to reflect logging in the 21st Century and incorporated feedback from the state logging safety crew and from logging contractors. Most of the rules are exactly the same.

One item that appears new is a clarification of how the State can shut down an unsafe operation. The State has always had this authority - since 1952 - and the proposed rules spell out how this would occur, if it did occur, and how an operator could appeal that decision if they felt it unfair. This proposal defines a process and an opportunity to appeal, both of which are important so that logging contractors can clearly see what the law has always said and things aren't left up to interpretation. And, again, it allows for an appeal in the event a job or shop was to get shut down and a contractor disagreed that there was a problem.

The State Logging Safety Program takes an approach far different than OSHA and seeks to advise and assist in fixing any problems that might be occurring. OSHA, usually issues fines and is punitive in their approach. Obviously, the state program is a better way to go than OSHA as we work on the shared goals of operating safely and making certain everyone goes home each day alive and without injury. Absent any type of state program OSHA uses other states' rules and the OSHA General Duty clause to address the situation. Having a state program like Idaho's which has strong input and support from logging contractors is a benefit because our rules are rooted in common sense.

The proposed rules are due to be published on Oct. 5th and when published can be found on the internet at this address: https://adminrules.idaho.gov/bulletin/index.html

Prior to Oct. 5th the proposed rules can be found on the DBS web site at this address: https://dbs.idaho.gov/programs/logging/index.html

Once published on Oct. 5th there will be a public comment period open until Oct 26th. After that time the rules go into the legislative process where they are either accepted or rejected. If ALC members have any questions or concerns please contact us! ~

HIGH VISIBILITY CLOTHING
By Monte Biggers

If we use proper communication, safe work distances and follow all safe operating procedures there should never be anyone in harms way. As we all know, things don't always go as planned. In cases of miscommunication or where someone has wandered into a danger zone high-visibility clothing may help. It's important to remember that no PPE (personal protective equipment) or anything to promote the safety of an individual are a replacement for good safety practices.

PPE's and things such as high-visibility clothing are used to help protect someone when things go wrong. Even though it's not required it may be a good idea to have your guys on the ground wear high-visibility clothing. By going beyond what we are required to do maybe we can lessen the chances of someone getting hurt.

CHAPS WORK...IF YOU MAINTAIN THEM!!!!

By Monte Biggers

If you have been to one of our first aid classes you have probably seen the saw chap test video. The video does a good job demonstrating the effectiveness of saw chaps. It also demonstrates the difference in performance between several brands of chaps. The video is getting a little outdated and while searching for a replacement I have came across some information I thought I should pass along. Here is the standard for leg protection while operating a chainsaw.

1910.266(d)(1)(iv)

The employer shall provide, at no cost to the employee, and assure that each employee who operates a chain saw wears leg protection constructed with cut-resistant material, such as ballistic nylon. The leg protection shall cover the full length of the thigh to the top of the boot on each leg to protect against contact with a moving chain saw. Exception: This requirement does not apply when an employee is working as a climber if the employer demonstrates that a greater hazard is posed by wearing leg protection in the particular situation, or when an employee is working from a vehicular mounted elevating and rotating work platform meeting the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.67.

There is no standard for the performance rating of leg protection while running a chainsaw. It simply states whatever you use for leg protection must be constructed with cut-resistant material and describes the areas the protection is required to cover. However, there is a way to ensure the protection you are using will be up to the task. The UL (Underwriter's Laboratories) has a system for rating leg protection. When considering what to use you should look for the UL tag on the item. Having the tag ensures whatever you are using is UL certified for commercial use.

I also viewed several videos where they tested very dirty or previously cut chaps. In almost every case the chaps offered little protection from the chainsaw and it cut right through them. So if your leg protection has been previously cut or have become contaminated to the point of being inflexible, you should replace them.

I also learned the importance of following the manufacturer's guidelines for maintenance of leg protection. There are many materials used in different brands and each material has its own unique method for cleaning. It is important that you maintain your leg protection properly. Just like we say in class *" If you are going to wear the PPE's you want them to work if you need them."*

We recently lost some members of Idaho's Logging Family in different areas of the state. These were not "logging related", I guess they just fell under "part of life." Our prayers are with those families.

After all these years, the one thing I will always be amazed at is how close loggers are, especially when something bad happens. The next time you run into another logger at the parts store or saw shop, slap them on the shoulder or shake a hand...I guess we just never know!

WRAPPING UP THE RIGHT WAY IS PART OF YOUR JOB

By Terry Streeter

Putting wrappers on is not that tough and most of the truckers do a good job...but there are *EXCEPTIONS!*

When I have asked, *"Where are you wrapping up at?"* here are some of the answers I have heard…. and then what was really going on.

"At the turnaround, it is about a 100 feet from the loader." (Over a half a mile from the landing)

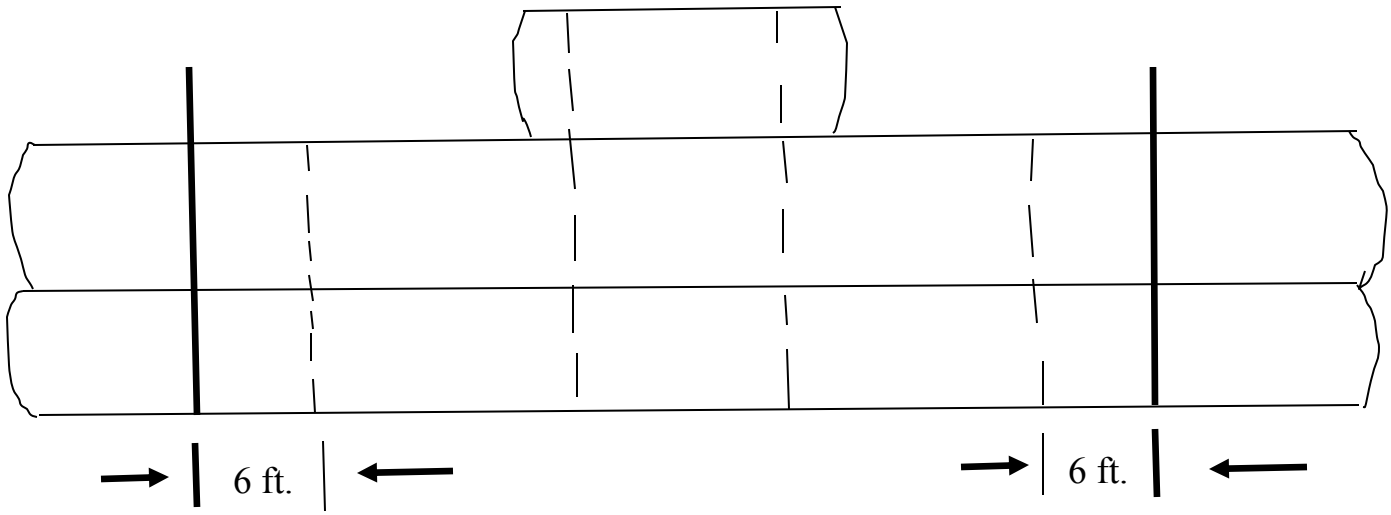
"Out of the landing, down the road where it is wider and there is no mud." (Past two dry wide spots)

"*Out where the sale begins*." (Out of the sale area and on the county road!)

I am sure all truckers know better, but a few still ignore the rules and it drives me crazy!

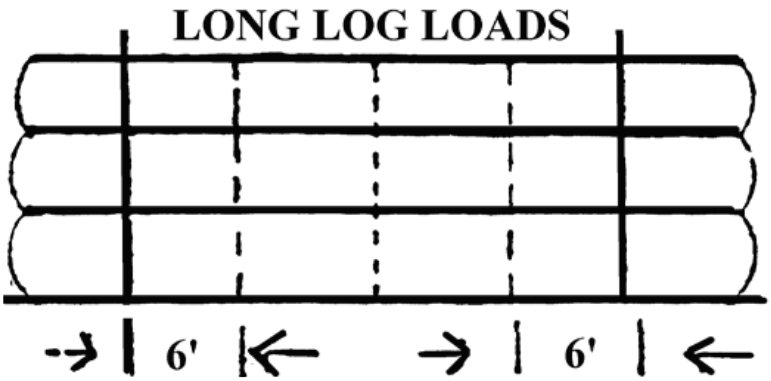
Logging roads are not straight and most of the time not very smooth. Taking an unsecured load down to some other place to wrap up is not only complacent, but it could get very expensive. If you were to have a log role off and crush something or someone because you were confident the load was fine, can you imagine what the repercussions would be to you and the logger you are hauling for! (Let alone the fines afterwards.)

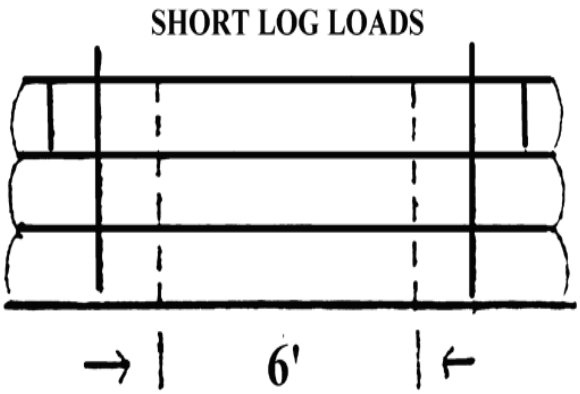
Securing the load for travel begins and ends at the landing where you finished loading it. When a truck leaves the landing of the job it should be safe and secure for the road. Do not let anyone tell you to get out of the landing before you are wrapped up so they can start loading the next truck.



Wrapping up in the "right spot" is important, and so is getting the wrappers in the "right spot" on the load. We are seeing quite a few 50 footers coming out of the woods these days with the bunks stretched out but still having short logs on top. Most truckers carry a spare wrapper so I would suggest you use common sense and throw that extra wrapper so you would have 2 over those short logs and *BE LEGAL!*

Wrapping up, continued:





17.08.12—IDAHO MINIMUM SAFETY STANDARDS AND PRACTICES FOR LOGGING —- ROAD TRANSPORTATION

15. Binders and Wrappers to Be Placed Before Leaving Landing Area. *Binders and wrappers shall be placed and tightened around the completed load before shifting the load for proper balance and a wrapper or wrappers shall be placed and secured to hold the load in place before the truck is moved from the landing area or out of sight of the landing crew.*

LETS GET THE "NEW GUY" OFF TO A GOOD START

By Stan Leach

It is an unfortunate reality that employees sometimes leave in the middle of the logging season. This year there seems to be a lot of that going on. When this happens you are forced to hire a new person. New employees are full of potential. They can potentially turn into great employees and make your life easier or they can potentially turn into one more problem that you have to deal with. You can have some influence on which way they go.

The new employee is nervous. He wants to show that he can do a good job, he wants to fit in with all the personalities on the crew and he wants to know that you value him as an employee. What better way to show him that you do than taking the time to go over all the safety aspects of his new job.

Don't just send him off to the woods hoping he will figure it out. If you can't be there, tell the crew to have a safety meeting first thing before any work starts. Have them go over where things are located, the helipad coordinates, SDS sheets, backboard, and first aid kits. Explain how to call for help if they need to. Go over the job specific safety training in your safety plan. Document the meeting and have them sign off. It's a great refresher for the crew and shows the new guy that you take safety seriously, you plan to keep him on, and that he is a valued member of your company.

Remember every new employee is full of potential….potential to make your life easier, or the potential to be a problem. You can help influence which way they go. It is not just a good idea it's the rule.

IT IS THAT BEAUTIFUL TIME OF THE YEAR. SLEIGH BELLS, PRESENTS and… "HE FELL CLEAR FROM THE TOP STEP OF THE LOADER!!!!!!!!!"

By Monte Biggers

This time of year calls for some extra precautions to be taken to help prevent all accidents, especially ***SLIPS and FALLS.*** Resulting injuries from slips and falls are one of the leading causes of lost time accidents, leaving your crew a person short and more money going out for insurance.

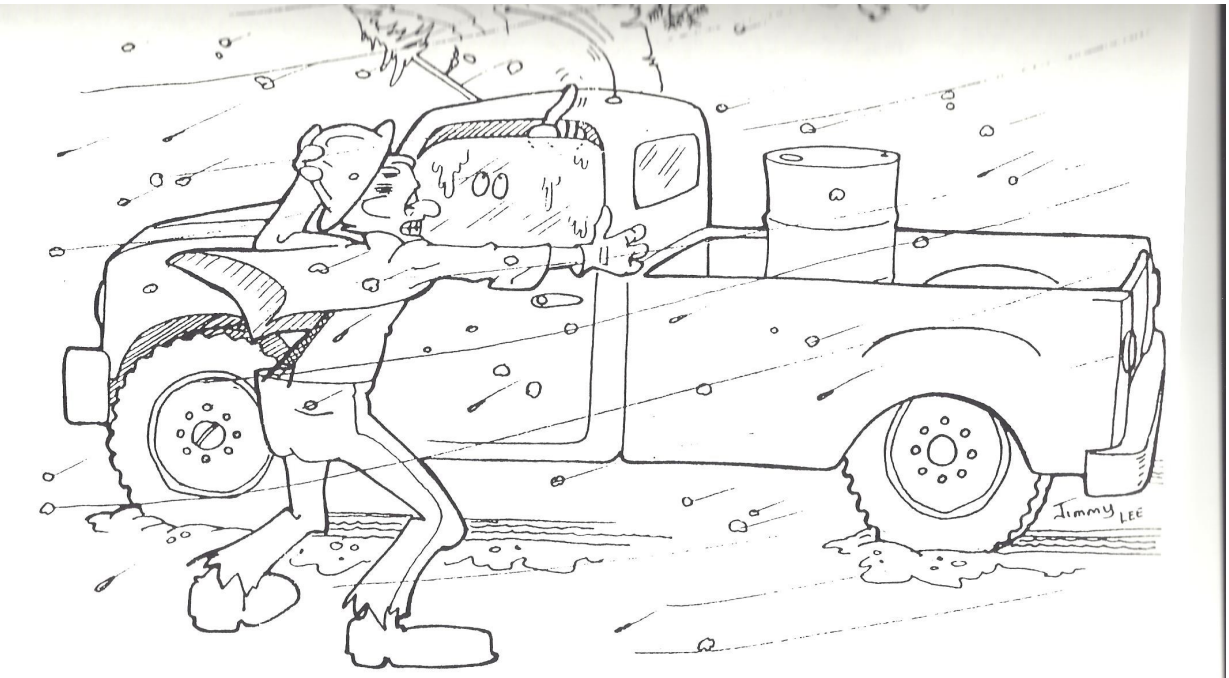
When conditions become muddy, wet, snowy or icy, chances of a slip or fall occurring increases many times over. We need to take a little extra time and make sure of our footing. The 3 point rule for mounting equipment or getting in your truck becomes even more important when slippery conditions exist.

When getting on or off equipment, you need three points of constant contact with the machine. That means *one hand and two feet, or two hands and one foot* – ***at all times.*** Anything less and you're risking a fall.

You should always face toward the truck or machine when mounting or dismounting and maintain 3 points of contact until you are on the ground or in the cab. You should never jump to the ground, even from the step of a truck. You should follow the 3 point rule at all times even when conditions are ideal.

Have patience and use your *HEAD*, that is the 4th point in the *3 POINT RULE!*

Slick conditions also goes for you timber fallers. Make darn sure you have a good escape path. A "*slip and fall"* at the wrong time in your job can quickly become more serious than a twisted ankle!



"WHAT-A YA MEAN, THE CREW WANTS TO GO HOME—, IT'S NOT THAT BAD!"

NEW TECHNOLOGY IS CREATING SOLUTIONS….
BUT MAY BE CREATING SAFETY PROBLEMS ALONG THE WAY!

By Stan Leach

Advances in phone technologies mean that we can communicate from more locations than ever before. That is great news if you have to call for help, check on the trucks, or order parts. However it also means you can receive *TEXTS*, *E-MAIL* or check out *FACEBOOK, TWITTER* or any of the other social media sites *during work.* This can create problems that we never had to deal with before.

Imagine a line skid site. You have a yarder, pick away loader, processor, and a loader loading trucks all working in relatively close quarters. This can be done safely as long as everyone is focused on the tasks at hand. But if any person in that scenario is distracted by his phone, things can go bad quickly.

What if the chaser gets his hand caught between the tree lengths while unhooking the chokers and he can't get the loader guys attention because he is busy texting pictures of the big buck he shot last night. The yarder operator can't see him so the chaser is forced to throw a limb at the loader cab to get the operators attention.

On a different strip the hooker down in the brush has a new I-pod. He has it loaded with all his favorite tunes. He has ear buds so he can hear them clearly. What he can't hear clearly is the operator or the sawyer or anyone else that is working with him.

A skidder operator on yet another job backs up to a huge buncher pile. It is impressive how much these new skidders can pull. He lifts the pile and goes about thirty feet before stopping, pauses for a minute, and then moves on. He goes another couple hundred feet, and stops again for a minute. The safety guy watching from across the draw is curious about what is going on and pulls out his binoculars. Ten power in focus reveals that the skidder operator is busy texting each time he stops. (No, I didn't let the boss borrow the binoculars!)

These things all took place on Idaho logging jobs this year.

Distractions can be deadly. If you can't stop looking at your phone turn it off or leave it in the pickup. Your safety and the safety of the people you work with depends upon you being mentally alert and focused on your job. There will be lots of time to check out all the things on your phone after work….***BUT NOT WHEN YOU ARE DRIVING HOME!!!!***

HAVE A QUESTION, WANT TO TELL US ABOUT A CLOSE CALL OR JUST HAVE SUGGESTIONS ON NEW SAFETY ISSUES TO WATCH OUT FOR, WE WOULD APPRECIATE IT!

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