

Chainsaw Safety Tips

A chainsaw is a great tool that can simplify heavy-duty tasks such as clearing trees, pruning tree limbs, and cutting firewood. However, operating a chainsaw can be dangerous if not done safely. Potential injuries can be avoided by following safe operating procedures and donning proper personal protective equipment. To be better prepared when using a chainsaw take a moment and familiarize yourself with these safety tips:

Fueling safety

- Make sure fuel is always stored in approved containers.
- Make sure there is at least 10 feet of clearance from any ignition sources before fueling the saw – this includes no smoking while fueling!
- Make sure to use a funnel when fueling the saw.
- Make sure the saw is not running and is not hot before fueling.

Starting safety

- Before starting the saw check the handles, all bolts, controls, and chain tension to ensure everything is in proper working order in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Verify that the oil tank is full, and the chain is sharp.
- Never attempt to drop start the saw. Always start it on the ground or on another firm support.
- Make sure to be at least 10 feet away from any fueling source before starting the saw.

Operating safety

- Before using a chainsaw make sure you have donned proper personal protective equipment, which covers hand, foot, leg, eye, face, hearing, and head protection.
- Never wear loose fitting clothing.
- Before cutting, clear the saw's path from debris, tree limbs, and rocks. Make sure the cutting surface is free of nails, spikes, or other metals.
- When carrying the saw either shut it off or engage its chain brake.
- Maintain proper balance and keep your hands on the handles when operating the saw.
- Watch that the tree trunk or limb being cut does not bind against the saw.
- Be on alert for branches that may be under tension and spring out when being cut.
- Be alert for saw kickback. Never saw with the tip and keep the tip guard in place.

Remember, a chainsaw is dangerous, but using one safely is not too complicated. Incorporating safe operating procedures, donning proper personal protective equipment, and being alert can simplify these heavy-duty tasks without incident. There is nothing better than accomplishing a hard day's work and going home injury free.

References:

OSHA Quick Card 3269-04R 2013, Chainsaw Safety

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