

SAFETY ALERT



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Re: FALLER INCIDENT

Injury: Faller struck on head by tree
Incident Date: March 15, 2005

Description:

Faller was working on a mulched line doing snag control when he noticed a loaded tree. He walked past the loaded tree to assess the situation. During the assessment he noticed what appeared to be three blown down trees leaning at similar angles and direction. The faller assumed that all of these trees were root bound. One of the leaning trees leaned across the top of the loaded tree producing the bend and the load. He decided to cut down the loaded tree. He established an escape path, indicated his intent to his second saw and proceeded. He cut into the loaded tree about 1 ½ meters from the ground so that if the tree split early; the direction would be down line and away from him. The faller completed the cut and took a step away from the tree. As the loaded tree fell, he was struck on the head by the leaning tree. The faller was knocked to the ground on his back with the tree that had struck him lying across his chest. His helpers came to his aid, and initiated the ERP. The slasher was transported to hospital where he stayed for 2 days for testing and observation. He then returned to work on light duties. __

During the investigation, it became clear that the hazard had been created by the mulchers. The mulcher operator had cut both the loaded tree and the leaning tree off at the base, but had not ensured that the trees had fallen to the ground. The mulcher operator then failed to flag off or report this new hazard to crew management. Next, the faller made the assumption that the leaner tree was root bound. By cutting down the loaded tree, the leaner was free to fall.

Substandard Acts:

- Failure to remove the dangerous situation mechanically (Mulcher operator)
- Failure to identify and notify of dangerous situation. (Mulcher Operator)
- Failure to complete a full assessment and made a false assumption (Faller)
- Failure to look up when falling loaded tree (Faller)

Corrective Action:

- Procedures implemented for the mulcher to remove any dangerous situations
- Procedures implemented for the mulcher to report any dangerous sites
- Reviewed falling procedures with remaining slash crews
- Alert will be circulated to all companies' group partners and industry

Contact:

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