

## Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

*Information guide – Rural industry***8. Chainsaws**

Chainsaws in the right hands can be one of the most efficient pieces of equipment on the farm, but before you operate a chainsaw, it is important to:

- read the manufacturer's instructions
- ensure the chainsaw is in good working order
- provide and ensure the appropriate protective equipment is worn, and
- ensure all people who use a chainsaw have been properly trained.

**Buying chainsaws**

- When buying a chainsaw, bigger is not always better.
- Chainsaws should be chosen for the type of work they are to be used for.
- Don't forget to equip yourself with the appropriate protective clothing.
- Choose a chainsaw which is fitted with safety devices such as a chain brake, anti-vibration dampers, and a chain catcher.

**Handling chainsaws with care**

- Read and follow the operator's manual carefully.
- Use the correct methods for felling a tree.
- Do not cut above shoulder height.
- Do not stand on the felled tree trunk when climbing.
- Check the chainsaw thoroughly before use. Ensure that the chainsaw is in good condition, the chain is sharpened correctly and all safety devices are fitted and in good working order.
- To reduce the danger of 'kick-back', follow the safety instructions. Use the correct grip.

- Always start the chainsaw according to the manufacturer's instructions; 'Drop-starting' is a dangerous practice.

**Maintaining chainsaws**

- Maintain your chainsaw regularly, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Keep the chain sharp and correctly tensioned.
- Always carry the saw with the cutter bar facing backwards and the guard in position when not in use.
- Fit the bar cover when the chainsaw is not in use.

**Protecting yourself**

- Wear protective equipment, such as cut resistant pants or chaps, ear muffs, safety glasses or face shield, helmet, boots, and close-fitting clothing.
- Never use a chainsaw if you are tired, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or if the weather conditions are not suitable. Chainsaw operators need to be alert to avoid incidents.

**Operating chainsaws**

- When operating a chainsaw, maintain a firm grip, get a good foothold and keep the saw close to your body.
- Always use a chainsaw at peak revs for easier cutting.

**Training**

- Chainsaws are not toys and should be given the same respect you would a loaded weapon.
- Less experienced operators should always be closely supervised.

- Never allow an inexperienced person to use a chainsaw. All chainsaw operators should be properly trained. Some operations such as removing branches from standing trees, the removal of trees on wires and cutting trees thicker than the bar guide length should only be undertaken by a professional.

### **More information**

Further information is available from [www.worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au) or by calling the WHS Infoline on 1300 369 915.

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