

Tree trimming/arboricultural industry

Plant/equipment

Dangerous equipment used in this industry includes:

• Chippers	• Chainsaws
• Stump grinders	• Elevated work platforms (EWP)

How can you get hurt?

- Entrapment – getting caught in moving parts of machinery
- Electrical – contacting overhead or underground power lines
- Cuts – from sharp equipment, branches etc
- Flying debris – eye injuries from debris such as flying wood chips, branches etc
- Falling from a height, or having something fall on you from a height

Chippers

Ensure:

- safety features are operational and in good condition – including blades and fastening bolts, tow hitch safety chains and coupling systems, inspection hatches in place and securely fastened, etc
- truck used to 'catch' wood chips is enclosed (ie, 3 full sides and a roof) to prevent chips flying around the area (and possibly into passing cars, and injuring people). Also use suitable methods to protect the public, including appropriate signage and where necessary, suitable barriers to keep public out of the area
- all equipment must be adequately and appropriately maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- all staff who operate the equipment have received adequate training in how to operate the equipment and the relevant safety features involved.

Chainsaws

Ensure:

- all equipment must be adequately maintained as per the manufacturer's requirements: including assessing sprocket side covers and body for cracks and damage
- safety features are operational and in good condition – including chain catcher cover fitted, chain brake, spiked bumpers and dog teeth, guide bar cover, handles fixed securely to saw, throttle triggers/levers and stop/start controls
- all staff who operate the equipment have received adequate training in how to operate the equipment and the relevant safety features involved
- workers should also be trained in tree felling and trimming techniques
- exclusion zones are in operation at ground level to prevent others coming into contact with falling tree branches etc
- adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) is available and used by workers including at least chainsaw chaps or chainsaw pants, eye protection, hearing protection and a helmet, etc.



Stump grinders

Ensure:

- safety features are operational and in good working order – including guards fitted to cutting discs, skirts on sides and rear to prevent flying debris, screens in front of stump grinder whilst in operation to also prevent flying debris, drive belts guarded, etc
- all equipment must be adequately maintained as per manufacturer's requirements
- all staff who operate the equipment have received adequate training in how to operate the equipment and the relevant safety features involved
- exclusion zone in place whilst operating stump grinder to prevent people coming in front of the cutting disc (a young worker recently had a leg amputated by this equipment)
- that the cutting disc is not rotating when moving stump grinder (that is, disengage drive to disc, and preferably hit disc on stump to slow the rotation speed).

Elevating work platforms (or travel towers, cherry pickers)

If you own the elevating work platform (EWP), you are required to ensure the following. If you hire it, you should ensure the competency of operators and that all the relevant information about the equipment is supplied to you by the hirer and passed on to the operator/s.

Ensure:

- safe working load (SWL) is written on the EWP
- workers use fall arrest equipment when in the EWP basket (eg, harnesses worn **and** attached to the anchorage point in the bucket, not the hand or guard rail)
- boom control levers return to neutral position when released
- outriggers/stabilizers are utilised every time the EWP is used (including using timber pieces for support and to provide flat platform for outriggers)
- all equipment must be adequately maintained as per manufacturer's requirements
- all staff who operate the equipment have received adequate training in how to operate the equipment and the relevant safety features involved, and if boom length more than 11m, operators are required to hold a certificate of competency
- an exclusion zone exists below elevated work to protect people and equipment damage from falling trees/limbs (there have been several fatalities resulting from falling tree parts).

Work at heights

- If tree climbers are used, ensure that relevant specific training and equipment is supplied.
- When climbing a tree:
 - do not climb above your anchor points
 - no free climbing of trees is ever allowed at any time. You must always be secured to the tree with appropriate arboricultural access/positioning equipment.
- Ensure that an exclusion zone exists below the elevated work.
- Have a rescue process in place, supported by the necessary equipment, and ensure that staff are trained in the procedure and practice aerial rescue regularly. This means that there should be at least one other person on site who is capable of climbing to be able to retrieve an injured climber.
- **DO NOT** work on ladders with chain saws or any other equipment that requires two handed operation, unless you have three points of contact or attachment to the ladder (that is, two feet and one hand, two feet and strap attaching you to the ladder as well as the ladder to the tree, etc).
- Ensure that harnesses are inspected daily by the operator/user prior to use and are regularly inspected by another qualified person to limit complacency.

For more information on workplace health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit www.deir.qld.gov.au

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