

# Safety Talk

MAY 2025



## FALL PREVENTION - SAFETY STAND DOWN 2025

### LADDER SAFETY

Falls are one of the leading causes of deaths and injuries for workers. Unsafe use of ladders contributes greatly to the overall injury statistics involving falls.

- Each year more than 4,000 workers are seriously injured due to ladder falls.
- Every year, more than 70 workers are killed in falls from ladders.



- 1. Inspect the ladder before every use.**
  - Inspect the rails, rungs, feet, rung locks and spreaders for defects or damage.
  - If you see any damage, tag it “do not use” and get another ladder in good condition.
  - Always check your ladder’s duty rating to make sure it will support you and your tools.
- 2. Position your ladder properly.**
  - Make sure you have a level, solid footing for your ladder.
  - Position the ladder near your work to avoid overreaching.
- 3. For Extension Ladders**
  - Set the base one foot away from the building for every four feet of height.
  - Extend the top of the ladder 3 feet above the landing when using it as access.
  - Tie off the ladder at the top-and bottom if possible.
- 4. Use the ladder safely.**
  - Always maintain three points of contact with the ladder.
  - Do not use the top step/rung of a ladder unless it is designed for that purpose.
  - Have a co-worker hold the ladder steady as you climb up and down.
  - Always face toward the ladder when ascending or descending it.
  - Never carry tools while climbing the ladder. Use a rope to pull them up when set.

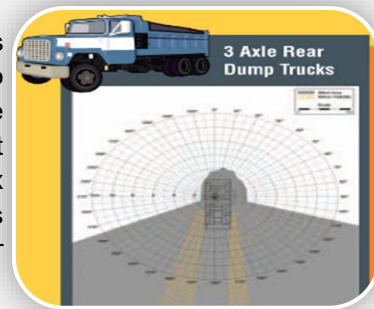
## MOBILE EQUIPMENT BLIND SPOTS

### BE AWARE OF MOBILE EQUIPMENT BLIND SPOTS

A blind spot is the area around a piece of mobile equipment that is not visible to the operator. Operators should not depend solely on backup alarms as a warning to workers on foot. Alarms can become “background noise” for many workers especially those in the construction industry. Several individuals have died from being run over/struck while they were in an operator’s blind spot.

### PREVENTING INJURIES AND FATALITIES DUE TO EQUIPMENT BLIND SPOTS

When working around large trucks and heavy equipment, the need to be seen is critical. Workers must be visible to operators in all light conditions and against complex backgrounds. Here are some things that we can do to help protect our workers on foot.



- Wear High visibility safety apparel such as vests, jackets, pants and shirts.
- Always get the operator’s attention before approaching equipment. Make eye contact.
- Develop a site-specific plan to minimize workers on foot where equipment operates.
- Establish site work rules prohibiting workers from approaching a truck until it stops.
- Set a vehicle travel pattern on site and mark it with signs and pavement markings.
- Limit site access to authorized personnel only.
- Eliminate vehicle-backing maneuvers whenever possible
- Use spotters when backing up near buildings and other vehicles or equipment.

### TRAINING EMPLOYEES FOR EQUIPMENT/VEHICLE’S BLIND SPOTS.

Determine each vehicle’s blind zone: Sit in driver’s seat, have another person walk away from vehicle until driver can see his/her feet, measure distance. For side and rear, repeat process using side/rear view mirrors. Area within measured distance is blind zone.

Remember that blind zones are also in front of vehicles, not just the rear.

Promote Awareness by discuss the hazards with every employee working on site. Encourage employees to maintain focus and to always stay aware of their surroundings and know where the blind spots are.

## CHAINSaw SAFETY

Chainsaws are powerful tools to help you in landscaping work or cleaning up after storm damage, but they can cause serious injuries. Please practice the following safety tips when using chainsaws.

### Always Wear PPE

- Head, face and hearing protection
- Wear gloves that are padded with polyurethane foam in the palm to reduce vibration
- Don't use standard cotton gloves
- Wear steel toed boots

### Know Your Saw

- Inspect the saw before each use
- Make sure the chain is sharp
- Inspect the chain brake, kickback device & safety throttle before operating the saw
- Use the correct size saw for the job

### Avoid Chainsaw Kickback

- Avoid cutting with the tip or upper quarter of the bar
- Keep both hands on the saw when cutting
- Stand to one side, so you won't be hit if the saw does kickback
- Never try to cut something above shoulder height

### Bucking Safety

- When bucking for firewood, cut the tree into lengths that can be easily handled by one or two people
- Be sure to stand on the uphill side of the tree, since logs tend to roll downhill and can hurt you if you get in the way
- Train employees how to avoid pinching the saw when bucking

### Additional Tips

- Refuel at least 10 feet from open flames
- Always start the chainsaw on the ground or other firm surface
- Shut off the saw or engage the chain brake when carrying the saw
- Never operate a chainsaw while standing on a ladder
- Use a bucket truck when working at elevated heights



## AVOID EXPOSURE TO POISONOUS PLANTS

Employees working outdoors are at risk of exposure to poisonous plants, such as poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac. To avoid potential severe allergic reactions to these plants, please review the information below.

### Workers may become exposed through:

- Direct contact with the plant
- Indirect contact (touching tools, animals, or clothing with urushiol on them)
- Inhalation of particles containing urushiol from burning plants



### Symptoms of Skin Contact:

- Red rash within a few days of contact
- Swelling
- Itching
- Possible bumps, patches, streaking or weeping blisters. (Note: Blister fluids are not contagious.)

### Protect Yourself:

- Wear long sleeves, long pants, boots, and gloves.
- Wash exposed clothing separately in hot water with detergent.
- Barrier skin creams, such as lotion containing bentoquatam, may offer some protection.
- After use, clean tools with rubbing alcohol or soap and lots of water. Urushiol can remain active on the surface of objects for up to 5 years.
- Do not burn plants or brush piles that may contain poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac.
- Inhaling smoke from burning plants can cause severe allergic respiratory problems.

### First Aid:

- Immediately rinse skin with rubbing alcohol, or a degreasing soap (such as, dishwashing soap) or detergent, and lots of water.
- Scrub under nails with a brush.
- Apply wet compresses, calamine lotion, or hydrocortisone cream to the skin to reduce itching and blistering.
- An antihistamine may help relieve itching.
- In severe cases or if the rash is on the face or in sensitive areas, seek professional medical attention.

## MAY 2025 QUIZ

### TRUE or FALSE

1. Running a chainsaw one handed is an acceptable safe work practice.  
**True or False**
2. Inhaling smoke from burning plants can cause severe allergic respiratory issues.  
**True or False**
3. Blind spots are only located in the rear of equipment and vehicles.  
**True or False**
4. Use spotters whenever backing up, especially when near buildings and other vehicles.  
**True or False**
5. Maintain three points of contact when ascending and descending ladders.  
**True or False**

### Answers

1. False 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True