

City of Newport News



Chain Saw Safety Program

Reference: 29 CFR 1910.266,
Logging Operations

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I. Purpose

The City of Newport News Chain Saw Safety Program has been developed to better protect the safety and health of city workers who operate chain saws and prevent chain saw-related injuries among city employees.

II. Scope

The Chain Saw Safety Program is to be implemented for all full-time, part-time and temporary employees of the City of Newport News who are required to operate a chain saw as part of their typical job duties or during post-storm clean-up activities. Any employee who operates a chain saw shall adhere to this policy without exception, and employees who do not follow established guidelines may be subjected to discipline at the discretion of their supervisor.

III. References

This program is implemented to meet or exceed all federal, state and local regulations including the Occupational Safety & Health Administration standard 29 CFR 1910.266, Logging Operations.

IV. Responsibilities

A. Department Directors and Operations Superintendents or Supervisors

- a. Shall ensure the program is implemented within their department as required.
- b. Shall enforce the use of required personal protective equipment by employees operating chain saws.
- c. Shall ensure that each machine is maintained in serviceable condition, inspected prior to use, and defects/damages are repaired or replaced prior to use.
- d. Shall ensure that operating and maintenance instructions are available to the employee while the employee is operating the chain saw.
- e. Shall maintain current program records for no less than 3 years, including a list of chain saw safety trainers and the employees they have trained.

B. Chain Saw Safety Trainers

- a. Shall attend a refresher “train-the-trainer” class every 3 years.
- b. Shall ensure training records are maintained within their department for recordkeeping purposes and provide a copy up request.

- c. Shall enforce the use of required personal protective equipment by employees operating chain saws.
- d. Shall maintain current certifications in First Aid/CPR and be prepared to show proof of current certification during chain saw operations.

C. Chain Saw Operators

- a. Shall abide by the machine's safety manual and provisions of the Chain Saw Safety Program at all times when operating a chain saw, including the proper use of all required personal protective equipment and general safety best practices.
- b. Shall maintain current certifications in First Aid/CPR and be prepared to show proof of current certification during chain saw operations.
- c. Shall keep the Chain Saw Safety training certificate card on their person and be able to show proof of training at all times during working hours.
- d. Shall use all required personal protective equipment when operating chain saws.
- e. Shall attend refresher training every year.
- f. Shall inspect the chain saw before initial use and before each work shift.

D. Safety Program Administrator

- a. Shall oversee the Chain Saw Safety Program for the City of Newport News and provide assistance to departments/trainers as needed.

E. Department Safety Officers/Designated Representative

- a. Shall schedule refresher "train-the-trainer" classes with STIHL every 3 years.
- b. Shall enforce the use of required personal protective equipment and safe working practices by employees operating chain saws.

V. Operations

A. Engineering Transportation Division

a. Sign Shop

- i. Very infrequent use, only when small limbs block signs.
- ii. No post-storm clean-up activities.
- iii. Affected job titles: Traffic Sign Marking Mechanic – Sr., II, I.

C. Fire Department

a. All Stations

- i. Moderate use in fire ground situations, typically for ventilation or access. Three man crew operating for average 1-1 ½ hours.
- ii. Post-storm clean-up activities. Three to six man crew per fire station operating for average 6-8 hours.
- iii. Affected job titles: All – Captains rank to Firefighter Recruit.

D. Parks & Recreation

a. Landscape Services Division Facilities & Grounds Crew

- i. Monthly chain saw use including general maintenance and cutting.
- ii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iii. Affected job titles: Crew Supervisor B, Carpenter II, Park Maintenance Specialist, Motor Equipment Operator B, Contract Manager.

b. Landscape Services Division Horticulture Crew

- i. Monthly chain saw use including general maintenance and cutting.
- ii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iii. Affected job titles: Crew Supervisor B, Crew Supervisor A, Sr. Motor Equipment Operator, Grounds Maintenance Assistant, Spray Technician, Landscape Inspector, Irrigation Technician.

c. Landscape Services Division Tree Crew

- i. *Operations are covered under the OSHA Logging Standard and subject to regulations set forth in 29 CFR 1910.266 (<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.266>).*
- ii. Daily chain saw use including felling and pruning trees.
- iii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iv. Affected job titles: City Arborist, Tree Trimmer Specialist, Tree Trimmer Assistant.

d. Park Rangers

- i. Monthly chain saw use when downed trees block park roads.
- ii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iii. Affected job titles: Park Ranger, Park Ranger Sr.

e. NN Golf Club at Deer Run Maintenance Division

- i. *Operations are covered under the OSHA Logging Standard and subject to regulations set forth in 29 CFR 1910.266 (<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.266>).*
- ii. General grounds maintenance activities including felling and pruning trees.
- iii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iv. Affected job titles: Auto Technician, Crew Leader, Crew Supervisor B, Golf Course Technician, Landscape Specialist.

E. Waterworks

a. Natural Resources Division

- i. Operations are covered under the OSHA Logging Standard and subject to regulations set forth in **29 CFR 1910.266** (<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.266>).
- ii. Clearing trees from fire trails, pipeline easements, residual application lanes, streams and dams.
- iii. General grounds maintenance activities including felling and pruning trees.
- iv. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- v. Removal of problem trees and thinning operations on Waterworks properties.
- vi. Affected job titles: Chief of Forest Resources, Watershed Inspector, Watershed Supervisor, Grounds Supervisor, Equipment Operator Specialist, Master Equipment Operator, Equipment Operator II, Crew Supervisor A, Construction Maintenance Worker Sr., Grounds Keeper II.

F. Public Works

a. Solid Waste Division

- i. Infrequent pruning and removing fallen trees on Compost Facility property.
- ii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iii. Affected job titles: Crew Supervisor C, Master Equipment Operator, Sr. Construction Maintenance Worker, Operations Superintendent.

b. Stormwater Division

- i. Frequent use as part of typical work tasks for Lake Maintenance.
- ii. Affected job titles: Crew Supervisor C, Equipment Operator Specialist, Master Equipment Operator, Sr. Construction Maintenance Worker, Sr. Equipment Operator.

c. Street Maintenance Division

- i. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- ii. Affected job titles: All.

d. Wastewater Division

- i. Frequent use as part of daily activities at Wastewater Pump Stations (Sr. Groundskeeper).
- ii. Post-storm clean-up activities.
- iii. Affected job titles: All.

VI. General Safety Best Practices

A. Chain Saw Operator

- i. The chain saw operator is responsible for reading the manual prior to operating a chain saw. If the operator is unable to read, a supervisor will review the

manual and ensure comprehension.

- ii. The operator must be in good physical condition and mental health and not be under the influence of any substance which might impair vision, dexterity or judgment. The operator will understand extreme fatigue is a hazardous situation in which they may lose control of the chain saw, and the saw should not be used.
- iii. **The chain saw operator will inspect the saw prior to use.**
- iv. **“Drop starting” the chain saw is prohibited. Start the saw on the ground, or while holding the saw tightly between your legs just above the knees.**
- v. **At no time during chain saw operation is another employee permitted within 10 feet of the chain saw operator.**
- vi. City employees with pacemakers should consult their physician prior to operating a chain saw. The ignition system of STIHL chain saws produces an electromagnetic field of very low intensity, which may interfere with some pacemakers.
- vii. Chain saw operators will not work in a tree unless they have received specific, professional training for such work, are properly secured, and have both hands free for operating the chain saw in a cramped environment and have taken proper precautions to avoid injury from falling limbs or branches.
- viii. The chain saw shall not be used to cut directly overhead. Do not operate the chain saw above shoulder height.

B. Chain Saw Safety Features

- a. In order for the chain saw to be used, the Chain Brake, Throttle Interlock, and Chain Catcher must be in working order. If one of the safety features is damaged or defective, the saw will be tagged “Out of Service” and repaired.
- b. The primary brand of chain saw in use in the City of Newport News is STIHL. Departments operating different brands of saws are responsible for complying with all aspects of this program. The Office of Self Insurance recommends the purchase of STIHL chain saws to standardize the use of these saws citywide.

C. Chains

- i. Green-labeled Chains are STIHL low kickback chains and will be used for all chain saw applications unless prior approval is granted from the department safety representative.
- ii. Yellow-labeled Chains are STIHL chains that have an increased risk of kickback injury. Only persons with extraordinary cutting needs, experience, and specialized training for dealing with kickback will use these chains (Parks Landscape Services Division Tree Crew, Public Utilities Natural Resources Division).

D. Power Lines

- i. Extreme caution must be used in situations where there are downed power lines to reduce the risk of electrocution, as well as to ensure the safety of the worker and nearby coworkers or citizens.
- ii. Identify downed power lines in trees by flagging with caution tape. Contact Dominion Virginia Power to notify them of the downed power line.

E. Felling

- i. Only city employees who have completed an approved training course may fell trees or assist in felling trees.
- ii. The Parks & Recreation Landscape Services Division Tree Crew shall be responsible for the felling of all trees on city property. The Public Utilities Natural Resources Division Tree Crew shall be responsible for the felling of all trees on Waterworks' properties.

F. Fueling

- i. Reduce the risk of fire by removing all ignition sources from the fueling location. Always shut off the engine and allow it to cool before refueling.
- ii. Fuel in a well-ventilated area outdoors. Select bare ground and move at least 10 feet away from the fueling area prior to starting the saw.
- iii. If a fuel leak is discovered, tag the saw "Out of Service" and have it checked by the Adult Corrections or Parks maintenance shop.

G. Anti-Vibration System

- i. The AV system should be well maintained to reduce vibration levels. When the chain becomes dull, it must be replaced. A dull chain will increase cutting time and increase vibrations transmitted to hands.

H. Maintenance

- i. Modifications to city-owned chain saws will be made only by qualified maintenance personnel and are prohibited without written permission from the manufacturer. Use only attachments supplied by the manufacturer of the saw.
- ii. If the chain saw is subjected to a heavy impact or fall, check that it is in good condition before continuing work. Check the fuel system for leaks and ensure the controls and all safety devices are working properly. If the saw is damaged or the operator is unsure of the saw's condition, he/she will tag it "Out of Service" and have it checked by the Adult Corrections or Parks maintenance shop.

I. Safe Operation

- i. The chain brake shall be engaged prior to starting the saw and also when walking with the saw.

- ii. When transporting a chain saw, ensure the engine is off and the chain guard is in place over the chain and guide bar. Properly secure the saw to prevent turnover, fuel spillage and damage to the unit.
- iii. To reduce the risk of injury from loss of control, never work on a ladder or any other insecure support. Never hold the machine above shoulder height.
- iv. Position the chain saw in such a way that the body is clear of the cutting attachment whenever the engine is running. Stand to the left of the cut while bucking in case of kickback.

VII. Required Personal Protective Equipment

- A. Hard hat
- B. Face shield
- C. Hearing Protection
- D. Safety glasses
- E. Work gloves
- F. Steel toe safety boots
- G. Chaps

Clothing must be sturdy and snug-fitting but allow complete freedom of movement. Long pants made of heavy material will protect legs from contact with branches and brush. Operators may not wear loose-fitting jackets, scarves, neckties, jewelry, flared or cuffed pants, unconfined long hair, or anything that could become caught on branches, brush or moving parts of the unit.

VIII. Training Program

The Chain Saw Safety training program will be administered by designated trainers within affected city departments. Each trainer may tailor the training to meet their specific operational needs and experience level of personnel. Employees who receive this training are city employees who operate a chain saw as part of their typical job duties or who may be called upon to operate a chain saw in the event of an emergency (post-storm clean-up activities).

IX. Program Evaluation

The Safety Program Administrator will evaluate the Chain Saw Safety Program annually to ensure compliance, effectiveness, and to account for any applicable regulatory changes.