

Tree Care Operations Policy

The purpose of the Tree Care Operations Policy is to protect employees from the hazards associated with tree care operations, and to ensure compliance with New Hampshire Department of Labor Standard 1403.60 Tree Care Operations.

A. Employers Responsibilities

The employers must arrange qualified training by certified instructor for all employees who engage in tree care operations for all equipment including saws, climbing equipment and personal protective equipment. The employer is responsible to arrange qualified training by certified instructor for all employees in safe operating procedures for when tree care is performed around overhead power lines. The employer shall provide at no cost to employees, all personal protective equipment necessary for safe tree care operations, and chaps specifically designed to furl a moving chain whenever chain saws are used. As the employer, he/she must establish rescue procedures for all employees who work above ground level and administer training for such procedures, and arrange qualified training for all employees in the hazards associated with working in close proximity to overhead power lines.

B. Employee Responsibilities

The employees must use all personal protective equipment provided when performing tree care operations, and abide by the manufacturer's guidelines, employer training, and the safety procedures identified in section C of this policy. An employee may not perform any tree care operation or use any equipment unless authorized to do so. The supervisor on duty must determine whether tree care operations can be safely performed by municipal employees in close proximity to energized power lines.

C. Procedural Overview

Head and eye protection meeting the following requirements shall be worn during all tree care operations:

- The head protection issued and worn, shall contain the manufacturer's certification that it complies with ANSI Z89.1-1981.
- When working in close proximity to electrical lines, the head protection worn shall contain the manufacturer's certification that it is a Class B hard hat, which complies with ANSI Z.1-1981 with revisions.
- Employees performing tree care operations must wear eye protection at all times.
- When chain saws are used, Amherst DPW issued chaps specifically designed to furl a moving chain shall be worn.

Brush chippers access panels used for maintenance and adjustment shall be closed and secured prior to operation of brush chippers. Each rotary drum tree, brush chipper, or

disk-type tree not equipped with a mechanical in-feed system must be equipped with an in-feed hopper meeting the following requirements:

- Not less than 85 inches (2.15m), measured from the blades or knives to ground level over the centerline of the hopper
- Shall have sufficient height on its side members so as to prevent personnel from coming into contact with the blades or knives of the machine during normal operations
- Each disk-type tree or brush chipper system shall have a quick stop and reversing device on the in-feed. The activating lever for the quick stop and reversing device shall be located across the top, along each side of, and as close to the feed end of the in-feed hopper as practicable and within easy reach of the operator.

When operating the powered brush cutting saw, the operator shall be within 10 (3m) feet of the cutting head of the brush saw at all times. The power unit shall be equipped with a quick shutoff switch readily accessible to the operator.

When operating a chainsaw, the manufacturer's operating and safety instructions shall be followed. Chain saws used by employees shall be equipped with a properly adjusted inertia chain brake designed to stop the chain rotation in the event of a saw kickback. Saws weighing more than 15 pounds (6.8 kg) that are used in trees shall be supported by a separate line, except when used from an aerial-lift device. Engines shall be stopped when saws are being carried. Saws need not be stopped between cuts during consecutive felling, bucking or climbing or cutting operations on reasonably level ground. The chain shall not be turning and the operator's hand shall be off the throttle lever while operators move between work locations. One-man saws shall be carried by the worker on his/her side with the guide bar of the saw pointed to the rear. A two-man saw shall be carried by two workers. The engine shall be stopped for all cleaning, refueling, adjustments and repairs to the saw or motor where practical, except where manufacturer's procedures require otherwise.

Equipment on which workers stand and spray, while the vehicle is in motion, shall be equipped with guardrails around the working area. Chainsaw and chipper work will always be performed with a minimum crew of two members (employees of other departments qualify).

D. Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment typically required for tree care operations includes gloves, safety toe footwear, and ear protection.

From the Town of Amherst's Policy and Procedure Manual, 2009.