

# Get A Leg Up On Chain Saw Safety

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — According to Earl Stitt, applications instructor with Keystone Stihl Inc., the most common, hazardous situation encountered by chain saw operators is kickback.

Kickback occurs when the upper quarter of the bar nose contacts a solid object or is pinched. The action of the cutting force reaction of the chain causes a rotational force of the chain saw in the opposite direction of the chain movement. This may fling the bar in an uncontrolled arc mainly in the plane of the bar.

Under some cutting circumstances, the bar moves toward the operator. Severe or fatal injuries may result. Kickback can occur when the nose of the guide bar is pinched, when it contacts solid

material in the wood, or when it is incorrectly used to begin a plunge cut or boring cut. Kickback may also occur during limbing.

Chain saw operators have several options to help reduce the risk of injury from kickback. For starters, they can use a chain saw that provides safety features against kickback. Stihl chain saws, for example, have the following safety features: quickstop inertia chain brake, low kickback chain, and reduced kickback bars.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Report on Chain Saw Related Accidents in 1989, more than half of chain saw related injuries occur in the upper leg, knee, and lower leg areas.

Protective gear can help guard

you against severe or fatal injury. Stihl protective pants and chaps are made of a durable, water and oil resistant outer lining of Dupont Cordura™ nylon, covering nine full layers of sewn in, Engtex™ cut retardant material. Protective layers are flared in the thigh area

to protect the groin and femoral artery.

When the moving chain makes contact with the material, the Engtex™ fibers rip apart, clogging the drive sprocket and stopping the chain in certain situations. The degree of protection varies

depending on chain speed, saw power, design of the sprocket, and similar factors.

Once the protective pads are cut, they can't be sewn back together to be used again. Protective gear must be washed correctly to maintain its effectiveness.



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