

# Don't Let Gathering Firewood Turn Into Tragedy

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Many people will go to the woods this fall to saw firewood and several may be injured or killed in chain saw accidents, says an expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Trained, professional chain saw operators use proper personal protective equipment, well-maintained modern chain saws and appropriate safety procedures to keep themselves and their co-workers at minimum risk of accident or injury," said Lee Stover, research assistant in the School of Forest Resources.

Stover, who teaches chain saw safety, says that people who use chain saws infrequently can be at a high risk of incurring a chain saw related accident. "Occasional users are much less likely to have a well-maintained saw and personal protective equipment. They probably have not had safety training and lack the skills needed to reduce chain saw hazards.

"One of my biggest concerns is that occasional users may not recognize the hazards in a cutting situation until they experience them," he says. "This may be too late. Professional users are trained to understand the hazards associated with the chain saw itself and can analyze the hazards in an area before starting to cut."

A key hazard of chain saw use is kickback. "If the chain on the upper quadrant of the tip of the guide bar touches an object such as another log or branch, the saw can suddenly jerk backward and upward," Stover says.

"To help avoid kickback, one

should always be aware of the position of the tip of the guide bar and keep it away from all objects.

"For a better understanding of how to operate chain saws safely, study one of the modern chain saw safety manuals available from many major chain saw manufacturers," Stover says. "Check with your local dealer or distributor."

Common safety recommendations for chain saws include:

- Grip the saw firmly with

both hands when the engine is running. Keep the right hand on the rear handle and the left hand on the front handle, with thumbs and fingers encircling the handles. This helps to maintain control in the event of kickback. Keep the handles dry, clean and free of oil or fuel.

- Make sure your cutting area is free from obstructions. Do not let the nose of the guide bar contact a log, branch or any other object.

- Cut at high engine speeds.
- Do not overreach or cut above shoulder height.

- Do not operate a chain saw when you are fatigued.

- Use safety footwear, snug-fitting clothing, protective gloves, and eye, hearing and head protection. Do not start cutting until you have secure footing and a planned path to retreat from the falling tree.

- Use extreme caution when cutting small brush and saplings. These may catch on the saw chain and be whipped toward you or pull you off balance.

- Keep bystanders, especially

children and domestic animals, out of the work area.

- Do not operate a damaged or improperly adjusted chain saw. Be sure the chain stops moving when the throttle control trigger is released.

- Follow the manufacturer's sharpening and maintenance instructions. Only use replacement bars and chains specified by the manufacturer. Occasional users should ask for reduced kickback bars and low kickback chains.

## Package Labels Make Safe Food Handling Easier

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture is working toward requiring all packages of ground or chopped meat and poultry products to have labels outlining safe-handling procedures. Some processors and grocers already have voluntarily begun using safe-handling labels. If followed, the guidelines on these labels can help decrease the number of foodborne illnesses.

"The USDA meat inspection system is meant to minimize risk of contaminated animal products reaching consumers," says Dr. Stephen Knabel, assistant professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "But there never will be zero-risk meats. It's up to food preparers to ensure safety by properly handling and cooking raw animal products."

Of the estimated 80 million people in the United States who contract foodborne illnesses each

year, about 9,000 die. Most of these deaths can be avoided if people follow safe food-handling procedures.

Hamburger is particularly at risk for carrying a strain of bacteria known as E. coli O157:H7. In January 1993, three children died and more than 400 people became ill after eating undercooked ground beef contaminated with E. coli O157:H7 bought at a fast-food restaurant in Washington state.

"It's important to take all possible precautions because even a tiny amount of fecal material containing this microorganism can contaminate a whole batch of ground beef," says Knabel. "Those handling and cooking raw meat, fish and poultry products should assume these foods are contaminated with bacteria even though they may not be contaminated. Cooking ground beef until the center of the meat is gray or brown and the juices run clear will help insure that the meat is safe to

eat."

Symptoms of foodborne illness may include stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches and fever. In healthy adults, these symptoms usually last only a day or two. But the elderly, infants, pregnant women and people with impaired immune systems can develop serious complications.

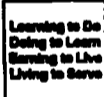
For further information about safe handling and cooking of hamburgers and other animal products, call the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline, at (800) 535-4555 weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Residents in the Washington, D.C., area may call (202) 720-3333.



### Pa FFA 65th Anniversary Commemorative Winross truck



In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the FFA in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania FFA Foundation has commissioned a commemorative Winross truck. The truck will be similar to the design above, with the body in white and the lettering in navy blue. Only 1200 of these trucks will be available, order your's today for delivery in time for the Holidays!



### Pennsylvania FFA's Third Limited Edition Tractor

1/16th scale Farmall Super MTA Tractor



The Pennsylvania FFA Foundation Announces...

The third in a Series of Limited Edition Tractors produced by the ERTL Company. This year's tractor will be a special version of the 1/16th scale Farmall Super MTA tractor. An FFA emblem decal will appear on both sides of the hood, and the tractor chassis will have the diecast insert reading:

The '3' inside the Keystone represents the 3rd edition - 1994 is the year this Collector's Tractor is being produced. The Keystone symbol refers to the Pennsylvania FFA Foundation's commitment to agricultural awareness throughout the Keystone state. The Tractors are package in a commemorative Keystone 1994 box.



Orders are now being taken for the FFA Farmall Super MTA tractors with shipments beginning in early January. This 1994 Limited Edition Tractor is available for \$31.50 plus \$3.50 shipping and handling. A limited number of the 1st and 2nd edition tractors are available, 1st year \$55.00, second year \$45.00.

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