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- EAR MUFFS
 - GLASSES
 - GLOVES
 - CHAPS
 - BOOTS



STIHL Chainsaw Safety Awareness Week 17 – 23 May 2010



STIHL Chainsaw Safety Awareness Week is back for 2010 with a strong but simple message for our Kiwi “Weekend Warriors” — taking five minutes to get ready before you start your DIY adventure is essential to your safety. It’s simple, put on some chaps, ear muffs and safety glasses, check your chainsaw and you’re ready to go!

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Monday 17 May 2010

DIY DADS URGED TO TAKE SAFETY SERIOUSLY

STIHL CHAINSAW SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

17 - 23 May 2009

The annual STIHL Chainsaw Safety Awareness Week kicks off today with a sobering message for families as chainsaw related injuries continue to rise - Kiwi blokes are setting a terrible example for their children by skipping essential safety steps.

Each year ACC handles over 200 new claims for injuries caused by chainsaws. The total cost of these claims to the country was \$545,000. The 'weekend warriors' who use their chainsaw every once and a while are the highest risk.

Supported by ACC, STIHL Chainsaw Safety Awareness Week is again drawing attention to the essential yet simple steps for safe chainsaw operation, in particular putting on safety chaps, ear muffs and glasses every time.

Seven-time STIHL TIMBERSPORTS® World Champion and father of three Jason Wynyard, says that as a Dad, it's his responsibility to set an example and to show his family just how important safety is.

"Kids learn by watching their parents. Taking five minutes to put on chaps, ear muffs, glasses and sturdy footwear is so simple and shows kids that safety really matters."

"So many Kiwis still don't see safety equipment as necessary, even with small DIY jobs or out in the garden. You wouldn't drive without wearing a seatbelt or play rugby without a mouthguard so why on earth would you use a chainsaw without safety gear."

ACC's Justine Ropata, says chainsaw's are more dangerous than many people think and encourages people to think smart when using a chainsaw. Remember to never cut above your shoulder height, always keep two hands on the saw and hold it close to your body and have your feet firmly planted and slightly apart for balance.



ACC'S TOP TEN CHAINSAW TIPS

1. Know your capabilities

Match the size and type of your chainsaw to the job at hand. If you don't feel that you have the skills for the job, there's no shame in getting a professional to do it for you.

2. Check your chainsaw

Before you start up, check:

- that all parts are intact and secure
- the chain is the right tension
- the chain cutters are sharp
- the depth gauge settings are correct
- all safety devices are in place and working
- that there are no loose bolts, screws nuts or covers

If anything's missing or damaged, don't use the chainsaw. This is especially important if you weren't the last person to use it.

3. Gear up

Safety gear can save your life, so take the time to put it on. Typical chainsaw safety gear includes:

- leather gloves
- chaps
- helmet
- safety glasses
- Grade 4 hearing protection
- steel-capped boots

Make sure that your equipment has the New Zealand standards "S" mark and that clothes are close fitting but comfortable.

4. Check your work area

Make sure your work area is free of tripping hazards and electrical cables. Also keep an eye out for anyone who could enter your work area and check to make sure nothing is going to fall on you while you are working (like tree tops, etc). Don't forget to watch out for the weather - some conditions could make your work area hazardous.

5. Never drop-start a saw

Use the cold start or warm start positions only. If you drop start a saw it could swing in an arc and cause you a serious injury.

6. Watch for kickbacks

Kickback (when the guide bar is thrown back towards you in an uncontrolled arc) can happen at any time. Usually it occurs when the upper part of the bar nose contacts a solid object or light material, or it's pinched while cutting. It can also happen if your chain is loose or the depth gauge setting is too low. Most modern saws have a front handle chain brake that can protect your hand and help reduce kickback.

7. Never cut above shoulder height

This isn't a good idea because it increases the risk you'll lose your balance, you can't see what you're cutting and it makes you more prone to kickback.

8. Hold and use the saw correctly

Keep two hands on the saw and hold it close to your body, with the body of the saw close to what you're cutting. Plant your feet firmly and slightly apart for balance. Never try to adjust your chain or machine while the engine is running.

9. Cut only one log at a time

And remember, chainsaws and their chains are designed to cut wood – nothing else.

10. Maintain your saw

Good maintenance will extend the chainsaw's life and ensure its safe to use. When you finish a job make sure the air filters, sprocket cover and chain brake mechanism are free from sawdust; clean the guide bar groove; oil the holes and check everything is in place (as per the start-up routine – see tip 2).

There you have it. Ten simple tips that will help you make sure you and those around you are kept safe while you use your chainsaw.

If you'd like more information on chainsaw safety, or are after some step-by-step instructions, download 'A guide to Safety with Chainsaws' from the Department of Labour's website at www.dol.govt.nz. Chainsaw safety advice is also available on the injury prevention section of ACC's website at www.acc.co.nz.



STIHL Chainsaw Safety Awareness Week 2010 – Top 5 Tips for DIY Families

1. Always remind your DIY Dad or DIY Mum to put on:
 - a. Chaps
 - b. Ear muffs
 - c. Eye protection
 - d. Sturdy shoes / boots
2. Check the weather – do the job another day if the weather isn't looking good.
3. Don't get too close to the DIY environment – watch from inside or at least 10m away
4. Make sure Mum or Dad take a break. Don't rush and tackle big projects over a whole weekend.
5. Remind Mum and Dad to get the chainsaw checked regularly to make sure it's working well.