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SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES

Pole Saw/Pruner

SOP 12B-34

Hazard Review		
Flying Objects	Kickback	Hidden Objects
Noise	Poisonous Plants	Utility Lines
Slip, Trip and Fall		

Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (Based on job specific hazard review)		
Gloves	Safety Shoes	Safety Glasses or Goggles
Face Shield	Hard Hat	Hearing Protection

1. Supervisors shall verify that operators are capable and qualified on each type of equipment before allowing the equipment to be operated unsupervised.
2. Operators shall perform a pre-operational check of equipment. Be familiar with operator's manual. Report all needed repairs promptly and do not use any equipment that is unsafe.
3. Operate in a well-ventilated area.
4. Clothing must be snug-fitting, but allow complete freedom of movement. Avoid loose-fitting clothing such as safety vests, jackets, scarves, jewelry, flared or cuffed pants or anything that could become entangled in pruner. Orange or yellow-green colored clothing such as bright orange or yellow-green tee shirts shall be substituted for safety vests.
5. Take frequent breaks. If you lack sufficient strength to maintain control, do not use it.
6. Always stop engine before putting a pole pruner down or carrying it. Accidental acceleration can cause chain to rotate and can be extremely dangerous while carrying it.
7. The muffler and other parts of the engine become hot during operation and remain hot after stopping the engine; this can cause a fire if placed upon combustible debris (leaves, etc.).
8. The chain guard must be used when walking with or transporting the pruner.
9. Fuel in a well-ventilated area. Shut off engine and allow it to cool. Remove fuel cap carefully so as to allow any pressure build-up in the tank to slowly release. Select bare ground and move at least 10' from fueling spot before starting engine. Wipe off any excess fuel prior to starting.
10. Do not allow other persons to be near the saw when starting or cutting. Keep bystanders at least 50' (feet) away from the work area, and the tree to be cut, to ensure that dead limbs or trees will not fall on you, others and equipment. Maintain a clear escape route 450 in a safe direction away from the cut. **DO NOT STAND DIRECTLY UNDERNEATH THE LIMB BEING CUT!**

11. Pruner is not insulated against shock. Do not use near electric lines. Maintain at least 50' clearance between pruner and any electrical line.
12. Keep pruner on firm ground or other solid surface when starting.
13. Do not cut any material other than wood or wooden objects. Objects such as rocks, fences, nails, etc. can be flung off and injure the operator or bystanders.
14. Keep work area clean and clear of any debris such as fallen limbs or other obstacles that could cause tripping and stumbling hazards.
15. Do not cut vertically from your body. Hold the pole pruner at an angle of not more than 60° from the horizontal level.
16. If bar becomes pinched and caught in the branch so that the chain can no longer move, shut off the pruner and carefully move the branch to open the pinch and release the bar.
17. Prune large diameter branches in several controllable pieces. During emergency operations, look for downed utility lines before using cutting with pruner.
18. Always maintain solid footing. Be extremely cautious when working on slopes or uneven ground. ***Never work from the bed of a truck. Never work from a ladder, tree or any other insecure object.*** When working at a height above 15' use a lift bucket. For pruners with adjustable shafts, expand the shaft only as far as intended for the application.

Related SOP's			
General SOPs	Chapter 10	Hand Tools (Power and Manual)	12B-13
Tree Felling	11B-84		