

IDAHO LOGGING SAFETY

NEWS

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Brad Little, Governor
Russell Barron, Administrator



Meet Kelly Waalkens the new logging inspector for Region 1. Kelly spent several years sawing and doing other jobs in the woods. He says he is looking forward to meeting all of you and working to promote safety in the logging industry. Welcome aboard Kelly!!

His contact info is on the next to last page if you need to contact him.

STOP

Answer one question. Is going home at the end of the day uninjured, the most important thing for you today? If not, why not? Do you think your crew will be more productive without you? Do you think the lives of your family and friends will be easier without you? I seriously doubt that the real answer is yes to either of those questions. So why do you keep taking chances and short cuts that will eventually lead to you getting hurt or killed?

We have had an absolute swarm of accidents already this season including one fatality. In almost every case one or two basic safety rules were violated. When interviewed, the victims response was, I was in a hurry or I wasn't thinking about what could happen. They all wished they could go back to the moment before the accident and change what they did that resulted in them getting hurt.

We have had several close calls as well. One I witnessed as I was walking up to a truck that was being loaded. The loader operator had a bunk lay on and was adjusting the logs to get them to lay in right. The driver decided to jump in and staple the load ticket on, while the logs were being moved. The operator seeing this stopped moving and beeped the horn to warn the driver out of there. The driver seemed completely unaware and asked me what was that for? I pointed out the risks of what he was doing. He said that they would have to move to finish the load and he wanted to be ready when it was time to pull ahead. That mindset is why we keep having accidents in our industry. We are willing to risk our safety to save a couple of seconds of time. You don't always get hurt when you take the risk so we begin to think it is ok to do it. Eventually though, your actions result in an accident.

The best way to protect yourself and the people you work with is to follow safe work practices every time. There are lots of things in our industry that we have no control of, so we need to make sure that we make the most of the thing we do control, our own behavior. We need to STOP taking chances to save a few seconds of time. We need to view doing things safely as being the fastest way in the long run.

We need to change our collective mindset. To keep doing the same thing and expecting a different result is the definition of insanity. Remember the way the work comp rates go in Idaho all of you are helping to pay for these accidents whether it was at your job or not. Most of you are seeing financial benefit from your efforts to reduce accidents last year. If the current trend continues though, you may be paying a lot more next year. STOP, the next time you are going to take a chance and think about the possible outcome. STOP, and think about going home unhurt to your family and friends. STOP, you will be glad you did. BE SAFE OUT THERE!!

Work This Summer For Fun Next Winter

By Shawn Ogden



Jose Gallardo with Miller Timber Services out of Philomath, Oregon. Logging on Bald Mountain near Sun Valley. They are using a Ponsse forwarder and harvester to selectively cut dead and dying timber from the ski area. Jose's harvester is tethered in this picture. He said if he doesn't get over 50%, he does not have to tether. Some of the ground he is working on is as steep as 70%. The oversize doug fir on this job is fairly rough and too much for the harvester to handle. They must rely on faller Alex Kittrell to get the big stuff on the ground. It is interesting to see this type of logging since we don't see it in Idaho very often.

Signs and Mile Markers

By: Wayne Lynn



Proper signage should be established as soon as you start a job. This includes placing a highly visible “LOGGING AHEAD” or similar-type warning signs at the entrances of active logging jobs.

Additionally, highly visible “TRUCKS AHEAD,” “TRUCKS ENTERING,” “TREE FALLING,” and “CABLES OVERHEAD” or similar-type signs need to be posted whenever applicable. Tether systems also need warning signs on remotely operated equipment warning that, “Lines and machines may start, stop, or move without warning.” Additional signs such as “ROAD CLOSED” or “AREA CLOSED” are also not a bad idea.

The CB channel should be posted at the start of the job or the beginning of the road system leading into the job. Mile markers also need to be established along the road leading into the unit. Landmarks such as “Switchback to the Skidder Tire” don’t work for anyone who hasn’t driven the road before, including the driver of the extra truck you got that day. Numbers or letters that increase going in work the best. “1 to 2,” “2 to 3,” etc. until the landing. A contractor recently told me he did this backwards once leaving the landing and working out. While it wasn’t his intent, it resulted in chaos! “2 to 3” was actually coming out and “3 to 2” was coming in. Please don’t do this. It is also important to maintain these markers. If they are faded, covered with brush, torn down, or covered with snow they are not effective.

Bee Aware

by Kelly Waalkens



It was about 9:00 am, just gassed up my saw, grabbed my pack, and headed over to my sawing partner to have a sandwich. He had just tripped a tree and as I got closer, I could see him standing there with a cloud of yellow jackets swarming the air. He was waiting for them to settle down a bit. It was a bad year, and I was getting stung 3 to 7 times a day. I looked at Frank and said, "Don't you ever get stung?" He replied, "I very seldom get stung. Its my clothes. They think I'm a big flower." He was wearing a very faded orange shirt and light-colored jeans. He said the reason I was getting stung so often was because of my dark colored clothes. He said, "They think you're a predator." How dare they think that of a nice guy like me. The next day found me wearing lighter clothes. I found just as many nests over the next few weeks, but the sting rate dropped dramatically, although I was still stung more than the big flower. I have learned since that time that there is a reason beekeeper suits are white. It seems neutral colors act like a camouflage to the bee's eyes. Try to avoid wearing dark colors especially black and red. Wear lighter colored clothes. It certainly is not bulletproof,

even beekeepers get in trouble sometimes, but I truly believe it does help. Hornet, wasp, and bee stings are the cause of over 220,000 visits to the emergency room and over 60 deaths nationwide on average every year. If you know you are allergic, be sure you have your kit. Let your crew know of your situation and what they can do to help you in case of trouble. If you or one of your crew get stung and you start to experience unusual symptoms like swelling in other places than the sting site, trouble breathing, tightness in the chest, abdominal cramping, intense nausea, diarrhea, hives or unusual itching seek medical help. Better safe than sorry.



Pictured above: Joe Mahon, Hannah Caudill, Misty Lawrence, Mark Mahon

Thanks to Mark and Joe Mahon of Tom Mahon Logging out of Council, Idaho for taking time out of their day to help with a recent show me trip to see logging jobs in Idaho. Mahons are on the cutting edge of technology use in the industry utilizing electronic chokers, a tethered felling head machine on their line strips, and a new drone to help string the haywire. They also make full use of the latest mapping programs in their operation. The ladies in the picture work for the Division of Financial Management for the State of Idaho. They help to facilitate the funding for the Logging Safety Program and have some oversight on the Logging Safety rules that go into the Minimum Standards book. We appreciate them coming out to see what we do and how they can help us.



Thanks to M. John Larson Logging for putting on a logging demonstration for a group of Clearwater County sixth graders. The kids got to watch these machines at work and even sit up in them. They learned about careers in the industry, the science of forestry, and how we work to stay safe. All of us that work in the industry need to help educate the public and encourage more young people to look at forestry jobs. Thanks to Clearwater County 4-H Programs Manager, Erin Rodgers for the invitation to help out with this event.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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LOG SAFE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY