



## Farm Bureau Safety Program

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**A CHAIN SAW** is a powerful tool that can be used for a variety of purposes, such as cutting firewood and clearing land. However, operating a chain saw can be five times more dangerous than driving a racecar. Some of the hazards associated with chain saw use are: kickback, burns, electrocution and loss of control.

Many chain saw accidents are caused by kickback. Kickback is the reactive force that happens when the nose or tip of the guide bar comes in contact with a solid object or is pinched and recoils toward the operator. Saws manufactured since 1985 come equipped with at least three anti-kickback features. Reactive forces can cause loss of control and result in a serious injury.

One of the easiest ways to prevent injuries is with protective clothing, including a hard hat, eye protection, hearing protection, gloves, long sleeve shirt, long pants and sturdy boots or shoes.

Eye protection is necessary to prevent chips from getting in your eyes. An object the size of a pea traveling at six miles an hour can knock your eyes out, so flying wood chips have the potential to cause even more damage. To reduce the risk of an injury, you should wear goggles or safety glasses

with adequate top and side protection.

Operating a chain saw for longer than twelve minutes without hearing protection can damage your hearing. It is also essential to use ear plugs or muffs.

You should not drop start the saw. When you drop the saw to the ground, you can easily lose control. Start the saw by either placing it on firm ground or by holding it between your legs just above the knees. Make sure the guide bar and chain are clear of any obstructions.

Always hold a running saw firmly with both hands. Whether you are right or lefthanded, your right hand should be at the rear handle and trigger and your left hand should be on the front handle bar. Prolonged use of a chain saw could result in carpal tunnel syndrome or a condition known as white finger disease due to the vibrations. These conditions produce numbness and reduce your hands' ability to feel.

As with any equipment, you should read the manufacturer's instructions before operating a chain saw to get the full benefits of this tool.