



## FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION INC.

600 JEFFERSON PLAZA, SUITE 350  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852

PHONE: 301/838-9385

FAX: 301/838-9481

## SAFETY ALERT

06-S-16

### **SKIDDER WHEEL RIM BLOWS APART, KILLING LOGGER**

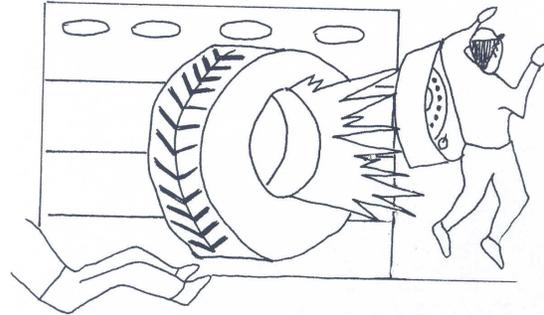
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[www.forestresources.org/MEMBERS/serpub/06-S-16.html](http://www.forestresources.org/MEMBERS/serpub/06-S-16.html)

**BACKGROUND:** On a winter afternoon in the Appalachians, a father and son were replacing a skidder tire in their logging business shop.

**PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:** Both father and 33-year-old son had many years of logging experience. It was unknown whether they were wearing any personal protective equipment.

**UNSAFE ACTS:** The skidder wheel rim had been welded two different times from previous splits around its circumference. The son had mounted a replacement skidder tire onto the rim and inflated the tire. While one side of the tire seated well on the rim, the other side was not seating properly. The father and son continued to inflate the tire well above the maximum recommended PSI of air pressure. The son occasionally checked the pressure with a hand-held gauge; the air pump did not have an inline pressure gauge to continually monitor the tire pressure. The skidder tire was leaning up against the wall. No tire inflation cage or other barrier was used.



**ACCIDENT:** As inflation continued, the son turned to his right, exposing his side to the face of the rim while walking away. The rim suddenly and forcefully ruptured.

**INJURY:** The force from the rupture blew the father backwards. The half of the rim that housed the air stem became a projectile and struck the son in the head and chest, propelling him backwards about 10 to 15 feet and killing him. After striking the victim, the projectile then struck the back wall of the shop, causing extensive damage. The other half of the rim blew through the garage door, then struck and damaged a vehicle outside the shop and eventually came to rest approximately 90 feet from the shop.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION:**

- 1) Never repair a rim or mount a tire on a rim that has been damaged, welded, or structurally repaired in any way.
- 2) Use a tire inflation cage or other suitable barrier when inflating single-piece rim assemblies.
- 3) Never exceed the recommended air pressure to seat tire beads.
- 4) Use an inline pressure gauge to monitor tire pressure continually while inflating.
- 5) Wear personal protective equipment, including eye protection, when repairing and inflating tires.

Reviewed by:  
Rick Meyer  
Appalachian/Southeastern Region Manager

WVU Injury Control Research Center  
P.O. Box 9151  
Morgantown, West Virginia 26506-9151

*Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.*