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SAFETY ALERT

06-S-2

FELLER-BUNCHER BACKS INTO WOOD BUYER'S PICKUP TRUCK

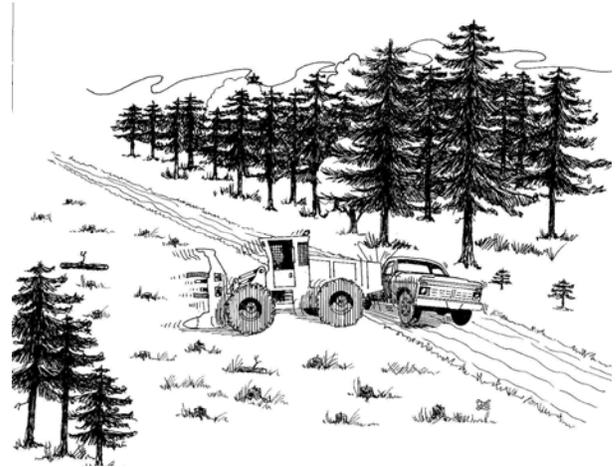
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www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/06-S-2.html

BACKGROUND: On a spring morning in the Southeast, a wood buyer followed a logger down a woods road to where the operation was cutting a new logging deck. The wood buyer parked his pickup truck approximately 75 feet behind the logger's truck. A rubber-tired feller-buncher was cutting trees approximately 150-200 feet in the woods, on the right side of the road.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: The wood buyer had worked with a forest products company for over 16 years and had experience in timber sales inspections, timber purchasing, coordinating logging activities, and similar activities. The feller-buncher operator was also experienced.

UNSAFE ACTS & CONDITIONS: After the logger exited his vehicle and walked into the woods, the wood buyer exited and walked toward the back of his vehicle. The feller-buncher operator, having seen the logger, began backing up so that he could speak with him. The wood buyer's truck was straight behind the feller-buncher and was in the operator's blind spot. The feller-buncher operator did not make sure the area directly behind him was clear before backing.



ACCIDENT: The wood buyer, seeing that the feller-buncher operator was getting very close to his vehicle, yelled and waved his arms. However, the operator was looking in another direction and was not aware that the wood buyer's truck was behind him. He backed straight into the passenger side door of the pickup truck.

INJURY: No one was injured, but the pickup truck sustained \$3,000 in damage and was out of service for one month.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION:

- Use special caution when driving into areas of active logging operations.
- Park vehicles out of the way of logging truck traffic and logging equipment to avoid the potential for accidents and disruption of operations. Never assume you or your vehicle are visible. Make sure!
- Logging equipment operators should look behind them when backing up their machinery.

FRA STAFF COMMENT: For an innovative idea on improving visibility from the feller-buncher operator's seat, see FRA Technical Release 04-R-20, *Rear-view Mirror for Feller-Buncher* (www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/04-R-20.html).

Reviewed by:

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