



FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION INC.

600 JEFFERSON PLAZA, SUITE 350
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852

PHONE: 301/838-9385

FAX: 301/838-9481

SAFETY ALERT

06-S-5

SKIDDER'S DRAG CAUSES INJURY

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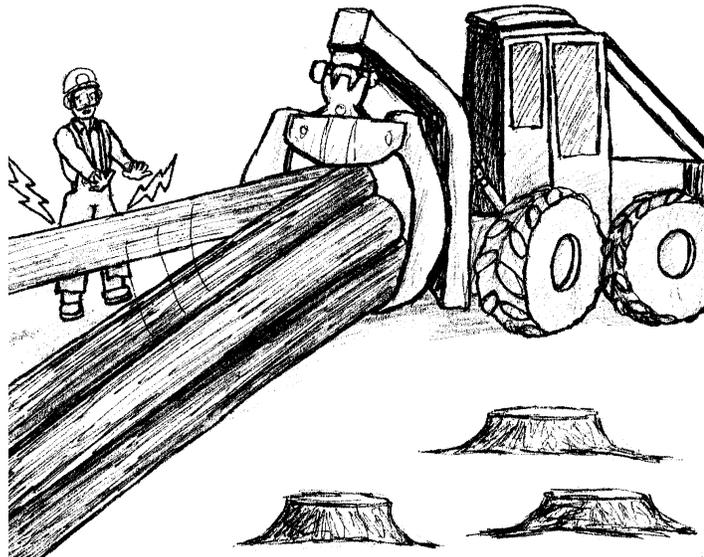
www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/06-S-5.html

BACKGROUND: A logger was trimming trees between skid trails on an overcast winter day in the South.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: The 45-year old worked as a logger for 25 years and trimmed trees for his company for four years. His company had a good safety program (requiring the use of high visibility clothing) and a supervisor who enforced it. The logger normally adhered to his company's policy regarding the use of high visibility clothing. The supervisor was out sick the day the accident occurred.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITION:

When the logger arrived at work, a co-worker pointed out to him that he was not wearing the proper high visibility clothing. The logger shrugged off his co-worker's observation thinking nothing serious would happen.



ACCIDENT: A skidder operator pulling a drag approached within ten feet of the logger not wearing high visibility clothing. As the skidder passed by, a log fishtailed and bounced up, hitting the logger. The skidder operator later stated he never saw the bystander.

INJURY: The log landed on the logger's legs breaking his left ankle and right leg in two places. Because his injuries were so severe, he spent eight months undergoing surgery and physical therapy before he could return to work.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION: There are at least two preventive measures that can be implemented to prevent a similar accident from occurring:

- 1) Ensure ground personnel and heavy equipment operators work at safe distances from one another.
- 2) Ensure all personnel wear high visibility clothing to allow for easier observation by others.

Reviewed by:

Jason Cutshall
Southcentral Technical Division Forester

Leo Lagneau
Amerisafe
2301 Hwy. 190 West
DeRidder, LA 70634

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